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A WEEKLY MAGAZINE FOR HOME AND TRAIN

No. 608. FOR WEEK ENDING AUGUST 25TH, 1900. [ONE PENNY.

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SHORT STORIES

No. 608. Price One Penny.

Week ending August 25th, 1900.

Baron Steiner's Great Discovery.

A NEW ZEALAND STORY.

ONE evening, in the summer of 1886, a number of tourists and visitors were sitting on the balcony of the Thermal Hotel, Rotorua, watching the rapidly changing beauty of the lake which lay spread out beneath them, whose waters were touched with the subdued and fleeting tints of the dying day. Beyond the lake the distant hill tops were bathed in the gorgeous effulgence of the setting sun. In the foreground, the little native village of Ohinemutu nestled amid innumerable tiny columns of steam which rose from a multitude of hot springs, charging the evening air with the pungent odour of sulphur.

To the majority of those on the balcony the scene was new and strange. Most of them had come from other lands; some in search of health, others again in quest of change and novelty.

The gentlemen were standing about in various attitudes, enjoying an after-dinner cigar or pipe; the ladies were clustered in little groups, discussing the day's programme and comparing notes of the places they had visited.

Through the open French windows of the drawing-room came the sound of music. A young girl was playing a Hungarian air on the piano, a low and tender melody whose plaintive cadence harmonised with the softness and witchery of the fading sunset.

"And you have not yet visited the Terraces," a stout and showily-dressed lady was saying to her companion, a thin, pale-faced little woman, evidently an invalid. "They are a dream. I have never seen anything more lovely, and Charles and I have been everywhere. They say it must have taken millions of years to form them. They are made with something that is in the water. Charles," she exclaimed, suddenly, raising her voice and addressing a portly, elderly gentleman who was standing at the end of the balcony in conversation with a

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"Do you not think, Mrs. Egerton, you ought to have your shawl?"

short and foreign-looking tourist, "what do they call the stuff that the Terraces are made of?"

"Silica," replied the individual addressed.

"Yes, that's it, my dear," she went on, taking up the thread of her conversation, "silica; it's wonderful. Of course, you will see them?"

"I am not sure," answered the invalid, in a doubting tone. "I am still very weak, and the doctor tells me I must avoid all exertion."

"You poor sufferers," said the stout lady, compassionately; "how I pity you. It would kill me to be cooped up all the time in this evil-smelling place and unable to fly about and enjoy myself. I must be always on the go. We are off to-morrow to catch the 'Frisco boat."

"Health is a precious gift," remarked the invalid, "but I do not find it at all dull here. One is always seeing new faces, and new faces interest me."

"It is as well," said the stout lady, "that you can find some pleasure in watching others enjoying themselves, but if I were in your place I should feel utterly wretched and lonely."

"I suffer a good deal," said the invalid quietly, "but I am not wretched, and I am not lonely. My son comes up from town very often, and Theresa—Miss Steiner, you know—is like a daughter to me. We spend many afternoons together when all the others are absent."

"Charles tells me her father, the Baron, is a very learned man, but a little eccentric."

"He is a student," replied the invalid, "and his hobby is the study of Maori life and customs."

"Are they Germans?" asked the stout lady. "I heard him speaking to his daughter to-day in what sounded like German."

"No," answered the invalid, "they are Austrians, I believe—at least, they come from Austria, but they have resided in England for a long time."

"One never knows," said the stout lady, "what importance to attach to a foreign title. An English baron is, of course, a member of the aristocracy, but your French counts and German barons don't impress you in the same way, do they?"

"I believe," said the invalid, "that Baron Steiner belongs to a very ancient Austrian family, but that through political troubles he lost his estate and had to leave the country."

"How romantic!" exclaimed the stout lady. "It is like the sort of thing one reads of in novels or sees on the stage. But what a strange idea," she added, "for a foreigner to come out here to study the Maoris. I think them abominable. The men are lazy and dirty, and the women are fat and ugly."

At this moment the music within ceased, and the player, a young girl, dressed in white, came out on the balcony.

Though her face proclaimed that she was yet in her teens—she was, indeed, little more than eighteen—her tall and graceful figure gave her a womanly appearance. In her mass of dark hair she wore a red flower. Though her features were pleasing they were not strikingly beautiful, but if they lacked somewhat the classic curve and perfect line, there was a winsomeness about her open countenance, an attractiveness in her bright dark eyes, a sweetness about the parted lips that could not fail to excite admiration.

She approached the invalid.

"Do you not think, Mrs. Egerton, you ought to have your shawl? The evenings grow chilly."

"Thank you, my dear," said the invalid, as the young lady placed a wrap around her shoulders. "This, Theresa, is Mrs. Tomlinson, the lady whose husband your father was speaking about."

Theresa bowed.

"Mrs. Egerton has been telling me how good you have been to her," said the stout lady, who felt absurdly embarrassed in the presence of this young girl, she knew not why.

"Oh, not at all," said Theresa, with a smile; "it is a mere nothing. We are left together, that is all, and Mrs. Egerton is not well."

"The Baron," said the invalid, in explanation to the stout lady, "is often absent for days."

"Perhaps you don't care to go with him," suggested the stout lady, addressing Theresa.

Theresa laughed a merry little laugh.

"He will not have me," she said. "He says it is not suitable for a lady. He is, you must know, an enthusiast. He is studying the life of the Maoris, and goes to their villages. He thinks I am better here looking after Mrs. Egerton; and, indeed, I think so too."

The invalid gave her a look of gratitude.

"I do not know what I should do without you, Theresa," she said.

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At the other end of the balcony, Mr. Tomlinson and the Baron were holding an animated conversation about the story of Hinemoa and Tutanekai.

"It is," observed the Baron, who spoke slowly and with a pronounced foreign accent, "the most beautiful legend in Maori history."

"But," remarked Mr. Tomlinson, "it is not true, of course."

"All legend," said the Baron, "is based on some particles of truth. And what is beautiful I prefer to believe true as well."

"You should hear my wife's opinion about Hinemoa," rejoined Tomlinson, with a laugh.

"Mrs. Tomlinson is a lady of correct tastes," said the Baron politely, "fashioned in conformity with the proprieties of our civilised conventionalism. But the customs of native races must not be judged by the canons in vogue to-day. No young lady would now dream of doing what Hinemoa did; but, after all, Mr. Tomlinson, can we be quite certain that our modern maidens are so far above Hinemoa. But, excuse me, I see I am wanted by my daughter. You are really going then, to-morrow? Well, I wish you *bon voyage*."

And the Baron shook hands with Mr. Tomlinson and joined his daughter.

Baron Steiner and his daughter had been in Rotorua for two months, and his short, round figure, was well known to most of the natives in the district.

He was a man of fifty or thereabouts, square-shouldered, with a thick crop of fair hair surmounting a high and broad forehead.

He wore a carefully-trimmed beard and pointed moustache. Behind his gold-rimmed *pince nez* beamed a pair of keen blue eyes, fringed with shaggy eyebrows. His complexion was pale, and there were hollows in his cheeks; his mouth and chin showed that he was a man of determination and will.

The Baron and his daughter had been long settled in England; indeed, Theresa had but a dim recollection of their Austrian home.

When she was still a child her mother died, and shortly afterwards her father quitted his native country and took her to London. They had lived there ever since.

When she sometimes questioned him about the past the Baron would reply:

"My child, there are reasons which prevent your father from returning to his own country. Perhaps some day we will go back and you shall know everything. But, until then, let us be happy here in free and beautiful England. We are alone in the world. I have but you; and you, my child, have but me."

And he would kiss her tenderly and betake himself to his books.

The Baron lived in the style of one who had a comfortable income. He must, therefore, have been a man of means. He was a student and dabbled in science. His time was passed in his library and laboratory. Theresa was passionately attached to her father, and was happy in ministering to his wants and looking after the affairs of the little household.

One day the Baron surprised her by announcing that he had resolved to visit New Zealand.

"The voyage," he said, "will do you good. You will see many strange things; it will be a change. Besides," he added, "there are certain phenomena, my child, in that country which I desire to study. It is there that the great problem may be solved."

"What problem, father?" Theresa asked.

"My child," he replied, "you would not understand. All nature is a problem."

And Theresa was content.

She was not a philosopher, and grand enigmas of science, which she knew possessed a fascination for her father, did not trouble her. To love her father and to make others happy, that was enough for Theresa.

At Rotorua, she had been left much to herself, for the Baron was sometimes absent for days, and in this way she had come to know Mrs. Egerton, a widow lady from Auckland, who had been recommended by her doctor to try a course of the baths.

A warm friendship had sprung up between these two. They spent the greater portion of each day together, sitting on the balcony of the hotel, reading, or sewing, or in the grounds of the Sanatorium.

Mrs. Egerton had an only son, who occupied a position of trust in one of the Auckland banks. Walter Egerton was a quiet but manly young fellow, who, though only twenty-three, looked somewhat older.

He had stayed a week with his mother at Rotorua, and had on several occasions taken the two ladies for a row on the lake.

Theresa, who had been thrown little into the company of young men, thought Walter Egerton a pleasant companion and devoted son. He had, too, a rich baritone voice, and in the evening would sing while Theresa played the accompaniment.

In a short time these three came to feel that they had known each other and been friends for years, and Walter's periodical visits, though only brief, were looked forward to both by his mother and Theresa with keen pleasure.

The Baron, too, was drawn to the young man.

One day he said to Theresa:

"My child, if God had given me a son, instead of a daughter, I should have wished that son to be like Walter Egerton."

"Father," said Theresa, "you are neglecting me for your Maori studies."

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And Theresa blushed and turned her head away.

The Baron's wanderings in quest of information concerning the Maori seldom took him, it was noticed, to the native settlements in the immediate neighbourhood of Rotorua. Where he went no one knew.

On one occasion he was seen camped at the base of Maungakakaramea, at the entrance to the Waiotapu Valley. At another time he was at Kouratara, a Maori village high up on the lofty Paeroa range which forms the western flank of the valley.

There is a track which runs from this village over the range, past the alum springs on the other side. This is a region full of interest for the geologist.

The Baron was both a geologist and a chemist, and appeared to find so much to study here that he determined to pitch his tent near to the alum springs. He spent a fortnight in this out-of-the-way place, exploring the numerous caves and fissures, and closely examining the character of the country. He became absorbed in his work. A native, one day, saw him emerging from an opening in the side of the range.

"What you look for?" asked the Maori.

The Baron started as from a dream. His head was uncovered, his eyes gleamed with a strange light. His dress was torn and bedraggled. He looked like one demented.

The Maori repeated his question.

"My friend," said the Baron, as if speaking to himself, "I am in quest of the unknown."

The native did not understand.

He thought the Baron was crazy and went on his way.

In this manner the weeks slipped past and the summer was drawing to a close, but the Baron did not talk of leaving Rotorua. On his return from his wanderings he would shut himself up in his room and pore over his books and pieces of rock that he had brought back with him from his rambles.

The tourist season had come to an end; nearly all the visitors had left. The only ladies who still remained at the hotel were Mrs. Egerton and Theresa.

"I cannot leave you here, my dear, by yourself," Mrs. Egerton had said, "after all your kindness to me. I shall stay until your father desires to leave."

But May had nearly gone, and the Baron had still made no sign. He had become strangely reticent and abstracted.

"Father," said Theresa to him one day, "you are neglecting me for your Maori studies. Have you not finished, dear. Is it necessary that we should stay here longer? I am growing home-sick."

The Baron regarded his daughter with a tender look.

"My child," he said, "it will not be for long. You must have a little patience. I have an idea. Hochstetter had a glimmer of it; but he did not hit upon the secret."

"Secret," repeated Theresa, "what secret, father? Why all this mystification? What is it you are trying to find out?"

"Wait," said the Baron; "you shall know, my child, soon."

The next morning the Baron again departed. He had left his tent near the alum spring, where he had already spent so much time in exploring the numerous caves on the range.

For a week he prosecuted his search with undiminished zeal.

The idea that had taken possession of his mind, which had occurred to him first after reading Hochstetter's work on New Zealand, was that here in this deserted spot, somewhere in the bowels of this riddled range, where the volcanic fires had blazed and smouldered, and smouldered and blazed for thousands of years, the great mystery of the origin of gold was to be solved. It was this haunting dream that had brought him to New Zealand—that had led him to undertake his solitary wanderings, under the pretence of studying the Maori.

And curious enough, the indications that he had succeeded in finding, had strengthened his belief that

Beneath him lay a mass of molten gold.

he was about to wrest from Nature one of her most jealously-guarded secrets.

He had discovered faint traces of gold on the walls of a cave, from the floor of which issued a thin jet of vapour. Beyond doubt, he said to himself, the gold was deposited by the vapour.

To find the source of the vapour was to find the source of the gold.

One day he stumbled by chance upon a new opening in the range. It was large enough to admit him without stooping, and looked like the mouth of a tunnel. He lit his lantern and entered without hesitation.

The walls were damp, and a peculiar odour filled the air. He felt a warm draught blow upon his face. He proceeded cautiously, for what hidden depths might not intercept his path.

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Once before he had nearly stepped into a yawning fissure and been lost for ever. It was necessary, therefore to advance with care.

The passage which he was traversing had many windings, and he noticed that as he got further and further from the entrance it became narrower.

The sides were jagged and slimy. Strange and horrible things, shapeless creatures of darkness, dropped from the roof as if dazed and stunned by the light. Now and then a snake-like form would glide rapidly along the wall, and disappear in the inky blackness. Once a gigantic bat flew into his face. But the Baron heeded none of these.

On he went until at last he found he could proceed no further. The passage ended abruptly at a wall of rock. He examined it carefully, but found no opening. He was in a *cul de sac*.

Disappointed, he was about to turn, when he felt, standing here with his face to the rock, a warm current of air strike his face. Whence came it? There must be an opening somewhere.

Raising his lantern, he discovered what looked like a shallow opening between the top of the wall of rock and the roof of the passage. With some difficulty he raised himself, until he reached the spot. Yes, there was an opening, but so small that he could scarcely get his body into it, though lying flat on his face.

Should he attempt to venture into this narrow hole? He had left his lantern behind him, and was now in total darkness. The hot air which issued from the opening in which he lay nearly suffocated him.

For a moment he hesitated, but urged on by an irresistible impulse, he dragged himself a ong. He would, he said to himself, go just a little way. But the heat was becoming intolerable. His throat was parched. It was with difficulty he could breathe. Pungent fumes choked him, a faintness crept over him, and he felt he was losing consciousness.

By a supreme effort of will he threw off this feeling. He braced himself anew. He would, he resolved, go on or die. It is likely enough that the Baron's fate would have been sealed, and that he would have been heard of no more, had it not been that a few yards further in he found that the passage suddenly opened into a lofty and roomy cavity, where the air was less close and stifling.

Wiping his steaming forehead, he stood in the darkness collecting his scattered senses, and afraid to move lest he should lose his way and be unable to return. Striking a match he could make out that he was in a kind of chamber, the floor of which was covered with what looked like fine sand.

At last he determined to venture from where he stood and to slowly follow the wall of the cavern to the right. With one hand on the wall, and groping his way with the other, he advanced cautiously and timorously, making sure at each step of a footing.

Suddenly he felt that he had come to another opening in the wall, and at the same time he could discern a faint reflection at the end of this new passage.

He turned and slowly groped his way in the direction of the strange light. A peculiar noise also fell upon his ears. He listened. It seemed like the gurgling and splashing of a fountain.

After proceeding for some distance he could make out that the passage he was following led to the side of a wide and apparently deep pit, which was filled with a thin luminous vapour. As he approached the end of the passage he went down on his hands and knees, and carefully crawling to the edge, peered below.

The sight that met his gaze made his heart stand still and his brain grow dizzy. He felt as if he was fal ing through space. There beneath him, radiant with exquisite tints, lay a mass of molten gold, millions and millions of ounces of liquid gold, refined and purified in Nature's own mysterious retort. For some moments he could not believe his senses.

He had, he thought, become subject to a delusion. He rubbed his eyes. But they were not playing him a trick. There was still the gold. By the merest chance he had made a great discovery. He had stumbled into the very laboratory and workshop of Nature. He was gazing at a phenomenon that no mortal had ever looked upon before.

Then, as he thought of the enormous wealth that lay within his reach—wealth so stupendous, so incalculable that the millionaires of the world would be as paupers compared with him—his brain reeled.

He, yes he, Baron Steiner, the political refugee, the lonely exile, was the richest man in the whole universe. He laughed, he wept. He apostrophied the dancing dazzling lake of gold. He would leap into its fascinating glow and find a coffin and a tomb that ten thousand thousand Solomons in all their glory could not equal.

Then, as he grew calmer, he thought of Theresa. His child, his darling Theresa, who was so patient, who was becoming home-sick, she should have diamonds that queens and empresses could not purchase. She should live in Aladdin's Palace. Theresa, who was only happy when making others happy, would scatter joy and plenty all around her. She would banish poverty.

The poor would live in clean cottages, standing in sweet smelling gardens. There would be no more slums, no more misery. Privation and sorrow would be driven from thousands of homes. The hearts of the oppressed would rejoice. This untold wealth that God had given him must be used in the service of mankind.

And the Baron sat lost in dreams—glorious and magnificent dreams, lofty dreams which only come to great and good souls.

"Father, you have news for me?" said Theresa, when some days later the Baron returned to Rotorua.

His face was radiant with the light of a great joy.

"My child," he said, taking both her hands in his and kissing her lovingly, "you shall know now. I have succeeded at last. Look at me, my little Theresa; your father has been in Hades. I have burrowed like a mole in the bowels of the earth. But, my darling, I have discovered a great thing. I have seen a subterranean lake of liquid gold. You are, my child, the richest woman in the world."

Theresa drew back in amazement and fear. She regarded her father attentively. A terrible dread entered her soul and froze the blood in her veins.

Had his ardent studies, his long and solitary seeking for the solution of the problem he had so jealously guarded, turned his brain? Was her father losing his reason?

The Baron was quick to divine her suspicions.

"My child," he said, "listen. I am not mad. Look at me; I am quite calm. It is true, all that I have said."

Then he told her of his search; how, under the pretext of investigating the customs of the Maoris, he had all the time been seeking to discover the origin of gold, and how he had in so unexpected a manner come upon an enormous cauldron of the precious metal.

But Theresa did not receive the news with gladness. It did not elate her. On the contrary, it troubled her.

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She felt a dull weight at her heart, a sense of impending evil.

"I wish, father," she said, "we had not come to New Zealand; we were happy in England. Let us go back; do not seek to gain possession of this gold. It will bring misery. It belongs to the Evil One."

The Baron laughed.

"My poor child, my little Theresa, you know not what you say. To-morrow, little one, we shall go together to my lake of gold. I shall bring you some of it out of the bowels of the earth. You shall see with your own eyes how beautiful it is."

That evening the Baron was in high spirits.

There were now only four guests in the hotel—Mrs. Egerton and her son, who had come up on the previous day, and the Baron and his daughter. They were seated in the drawing-room, where a bright fire burned, for the night was cold and wet. Theresa played and Walter sang. The Baron and Mrs. Egerton were engaged in a game of cribbage.

The evening passed quickly and pleasantly. They were a quiet and happy party. Before they separated for the night the Baron said to Mrs. Egerton:

"We are leaving here on Monday next. I have finished what I had in hand."

"We shall return to Auckland together," Mrs. Egerton replied. "I shall be glad to leave Rotorua. I feel the cold."

"Good-night, all," cried the Baron, gaily; then, as if seized with a sudden thought, he called Walter to him. "I want to ask you a question," he said. "Supposing someone were to leave you a large fortune, what would you do?"

"Do you want to know really?" he asked.

"Of course," said the Baron.

"I would ask you," replied Walter, in a low voice, "for the hand of your daughter."

Walter ran across the room and, drawing the curtains, looked out of the window.

"I thought as much," said the Baron. "Well, who knows? The age of fairies is not past yet. Good-night."

The Baron opened the window and went on to the balcony. The rain had ceased and the stars were shining, but a cold wind blew over the lake. No lights were visible in the native settlement. All was silent and peaceful. He returned to the drawing-room, closing the window behind him.

Theresa was standing in front of the fire waiting to receive her good-night kiss.

"It is freezing to-night," said the Baron, shivering; "run to bed, little one, and God bless you."

That was destined to be a memorable night in Rotorua. Soon after midnight everyone in the hotel was awakened by the violent shaking of the building, caused by an earthquake.

Theresa sprang out of bed and lit her candle. It was her first experience of an earthquake, and she thought the hotel was about to collapse, burying everyone beneath it. Slipping on her dressing-gown, she rushed to her father's room and rapped loudly at the door.

"Father?" she called, "Father?"

"My dear," answered the Baron calmly, "don't be alarmed. It is nothing. There is no danger. Go back to your room. Have no fear."

On the way back, somewhat reassured, Theresa met Mrs. Egerton, who was also nervous and anxious.

"Father," said Theresa, "says there is no danger."

The two women went to Theresa's bedroom.

A second shock again caused the windows to rattle, and the pictures on the walls to move. After this other but less violent shocks came in quick succession.

Clinging together in bed Mrs. Egerton and Theresa heard servants moving about, and the sound of Walter's voice at the door. He affected to treat the matter lightly.

"This is a pretty how-do-you-do," he called out to

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them cheerily. "How do you like being shaken by an earthquake, Miss Steiner?"

Theresa did not like it at all. However, the shocks became less frequent and less severe, and the terrified sleepers were beginning to hope that they were at last passing away, when one, more violent than any before, almost hurled them from their beds.

Then a roar, deep, prolonged and fearsome, startled the most courageous. Something unusual had occurred. Was the earth about to open and swallow them. There was now a general rush for the street.

Mrs. Egerton and Theresa, wrapping a blanket each around them, ran long the corridor, meeting the Baron and Walter, who were on their way to fetch them.

"I fear something dreadful has happened," said Walter, hurriedly. "It will be better for us to leave the building in case of danger."

The Baron did not speak. He appeared dazed and confused.

As they passed the drawing-room door a reflected light filled the room.

"Surely there must be a fire somewhere," remarked Mrs. Egerton, standing at the open door.

Walter ran across the room and, drawing the curtains aside, looked out of the window.

"Great heavens!" he exclaimed in a tone of awe. "Come here!"

They went to where he was standing staring, spell-bound. A magnificent but an appalling sight met their gaze. Far off, but apparently close, Mount Tarawera was shooting up balls of liquid fire into the black sky, where they burst into millions of brilliant stars; and out of the inky cloud of smoke and dust, which hung above the roaring mountains, flashed and darted in all directions ten thousand tongues of vivid lightning of all conceivable colours.

"Heavens!" exclaimed the Baron, "it is a volcanic eruption and I am lost."

The women shrieked in terror.

"Let us hasten from here," said Walter, taking his mother and Theresa by the arm and hurrying them from the hotel.

On getting outside they were swallowed in darkness. Fine dust was falling, and the atmosphere was filled with sulphurous fumes. They could hear the shouts of human voices. Everyone was fleeing, panic-stricken Europeans and natives, men, women, and children, most of them scantily dressed.

"Get on the Oxford Road," a man shouted to them, as he ran past. "Whakarewarewa will go next."

He carried a lantern and they followed him as well as they could, moving with the stream of panic-stricken fugitives, being jostled and knocked about by those wild with fear, who thought only of their own safety.

After they had gone a mile or so Mrs. Egerton stopped. She could, she said, proceed no further. She was exhausted, and her feet were cut and bleeding.

Theresa, too, was suffering great agony. There were little groups all around them—women in hysterics, and children crying and strong men chafing at their own helplessness.

Suddenly Theresa discovered that her father was not with them.

In the excitement and confusion of their hurried flight in the darkness and din which prevailed, the absence of the Baron had not been noticed before.

Theresa was inconsolable.

"I must go back," she said; "I must find him."

"That would be madness, Theresa," said Walter, unconsciously addressing her for the first time in his life by her christian name. "You must remain here until it is light."

The hours passed with agonising slowness, but at last the welcome dawn came, restoring courage to the huddled fugitives by the roadside. The air was full of smoke, but Rotorua had not been destroyed. All the buildings were still standing.

There was, however, no sign of the Baron, nor did they see anything of him on their way back to the hotel. Here dreadful news awaited them.

The Baron shortly before their arrival, had been picked up from beneath the balcony in an insensible condition. He must have lost his presence of mind, and, instead of following the others, had tried to effect his escape by means of the balcony, and had fallen on the concrete pathway below.

The sad news was broken gently to Theresa by Mrs. Egerton. Theresa insisted on being taken to her father at once.

The Baron was lying in his room. His face was covered with blood. He appeared to have fallen on his head.

"My poor dear father," cried Theresa, falling on her knees by his side; and burying her face in her hands she sobbed piteously.

They led her away, gently and sorrowfully, and on reaching her room she swooned in Mrs. Egerton's arms.

When the doctor arrived he pronounced the Baron's case hopeless. He had sustain a double fracture of the skull. The Baron did not regain consciousness. He lingered until noon, when he died.

Theresa received the news with preternatural calmness. She did not speak; she did not weep. She sat with fixed gaze and rigid face, every line of which expressed intense suffering and grief. Next morning she was delirious, and in a raging fever.

* * * * *

It was late in the Spring, and the weather was warm and beautiful. Already the flowers were bursting into bloom.

In a pleasant garden ovelooking the Waitemata, Theresa was sitting in an arm-chair, her head resting on a pillow. A rug was wrapped round her knees. She was looking pale and thin, and showed signs of recent suffering and illness. Mrs. Egerton occupied a seat beside her.

"Yes," Theresa was saying, "I have promised, and Walter has promised. He will not seek to find the gold poor father told me of. If it exists there is a curse upon it. It is a destroyer."

"That's the compact, mother," said Walter, who joined them as she finished speaking. "And yet Theresa might be the wealthiest woman in the world."

"I prefer," said Theresa in a low sweet voice, looking up into the manly face of her lover, "to be the happiest."

M. T. Leveson.

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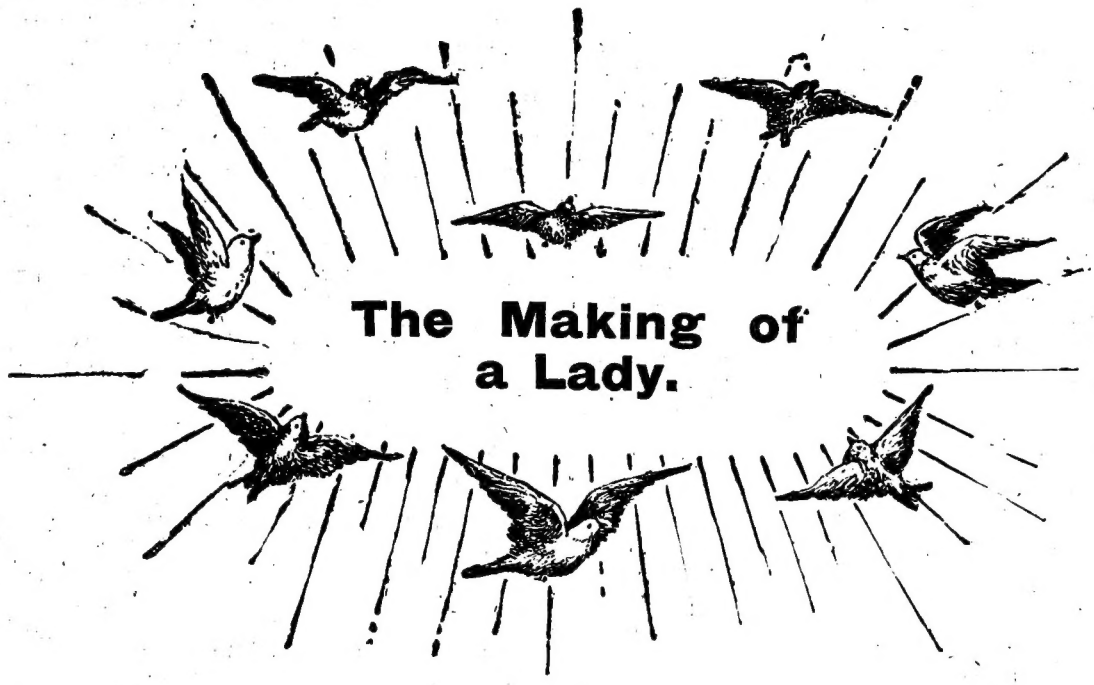

The Making of a Lady.

THE cabin was built of logs, time-stained and decaying, the moss of fifty years upon its roof. It lay back among the blue gums at the very foot of the mountain, where the river ran shallow through the gulch.

For half a century it had weathered the storms of winter and the heat of summer, for it was a "forty-niner," as was also Jacob Wainright, who had hewn the logs and built it with his own sturdy hands when the gold excitement was at its highest in Australia.

He had camped on the creek and slept on the ground when he first came to the gold regions. Camping had been good enough for the hardy young prospector. But when Margarita dawned upon the horizon of his life it became a different matter. The cabin had been built for Margarita.

Jacob Wainright had not been one of fortune's favourites, who awakened penniless and before sunset found himself a millionaire—at least not during the time when such instances were a frequent occurrence.

The fickle goddess had proved a laggard as far as he was concerned, and for several years refused to smile upon his efforts. But Margarita was as happy as the sunshine that drifted into the canyon and flooded the doorway. She sang as gaily as the mocking bird in the gums at the back of the cabin.

When the little Carlotta came she sang more joyously than ever. In Jacob Wainright's opinion her sweet voice far out-rivalled the birds. He made good wages out of the dirt he panned, if he did not gain wealth, and with health and happiness a man would have been an ingrate to worry.

"It will come some day," he used to tell Margarita. "It will come in plenty of time to make a lady of Carlotta."

For Jacob Wainright and his faithful young wife had but one ambition, and that was to make a lady of their little girl.

When, after a few happy years of life together, Margarita was laid to rest under the shade of the gum trees and her brief bright life was only a beautiful memory, Wainright had but Carlotta to think of and plan for. She was his one thought, his constant companion, his heart's idol. It was then that the thirst for riches took full possession of him.

Gold! Gold! He thought of it night and day; he saw it glittering and yellow in his dreams. He must have it. The mountains must yield their hidden treasures—all for Carlotta.

With her he tramped over the mountains on long prospecting tours, hoping that each day would bring him Carlotta's fortune. It was when he was not looking for it that his good luck came to him.

They were walking down the gulch one afternoon not far from Wainright's cabin, when he suddenly dropped Carlotta's hand and went down on his knees, digging in the ground with his hands where the rocks lay broken and crushed. He seemed like one who had lost his senses. Then he sprang to his feet, his eyes black with excitement. In his toil-hardened hand were several lumps of yellow ore.

"I've struck it, Carlotty!" he shouted. "I've struck it rich, honey! Hooray, little 'un; we'll make a lady of you now!"

Later, when Carlotta was old enough to be sent to school, he took her to Paramatta and placed her with the Sisters at Notre Dame. It was a great wrench to Wainright to give her up, but nothing should stand in the way of Carlotta's future.

Once a month he went to Paramatta to see her. His increasing wonder and delight over the advancement of the pretty little girl in fine frocks, with a manner that awed Wainright, was touching to witness. He seemed half afraid of the dainty little maid and would take her small hand in his and stroke it with his big roughened

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finger, or, lifting her cautiously to his knee, would pass his hand bashfully over her dark curls.

"Who'd a thought it?" he would say proudly. "A awkward, no 'count feller like me havin' a little gal like Carlotty! Ain't she a comin' on, though? Why, she'll be a lady in no time!"

Four years later she went to Sydney to one of the best schools, and when the time came for her to graduate, Wainright donned his best suit of clothes and went to see his little girl in all her glory. Afterward he watched her depart with a party of wealthy people from Sydney for Europe.

He stood on the wharf and waved his handkerchief as long as he could see the steamer. Carlotta returned his farewell by waving a dainty bit of lace and linen once or twice, but she was talking with the kid-gloved scion of a prominent Sydney family, and the commonplace, rugged-faced man, with "the decidedly Western look," as her friends had described her father, standing alone on the wharf in the great city full of strangers was soon forgotten.

Wainright had coughed a little over a lump that rose in his throat when he found his parting salute no longer returned. He ceased to wave his bandana and rubbed it hastily across his eyes.

"By gum!" he muttered. "I'm a low down sort of creature. I want to keep that little gal of mine from everybody. There's selfishness for you!"

Carlotta had remained abroad two years. When she returned to Australia she was a highly accomplished young lady. It had taken a small fortune to supply her needs while abroad, but Wainright never stinted her. Nothing was too good for his "little gal."

Immediately on her return to Sydney she was married to an immaculate person belonging to one of the most aristocratic families in the place. This was why she could not come home, she wrote. She sent her father the wedding cards and begged him to come and attend her wedding. But they did not arrive till after the date of the marriage.

Wainright grieved greatly that he should have missed the pleasure of his little girl's grand wedding. But he read it in the papers until, to use his own words, "he knew it by heart," and could repeat it word for word in the dark after he went to bed.

He went to see Carlotta once in the lovely house he had given her as a wedding present. But his visit was not a long one. He felt out of place in the elegant house. Carlotta's distinguished-looking, aristocratic husband was a being he could not come in touch with. Wainright stood in great awe of him, regarding him with an unmixed admiration at a distance. It is doubtful if the compliment were returned. Carlotta's husband was too well bred, however, to treat his wife's rich father with anything but courtesy. He explained to his friends that his father-in-law was immensely rich and a well-meaning man, but "distinctively Western."

Wainright made a short visit; somehow he couldn't breathe in the imposing Sydney home. He was anxious to get back to the backwoods.

With a promise from Carlotta to visit him in the old home the next year, he returned to the mine and his beloved mountains.

"It's the place for an old feller like me, I fancy," he said, soberly, and fell into thoughtful silence.

But Carlotta did not come the next year—nor the next. The years sped by and children came to her home, but there was always some reason why she could not visit the far West.

Her husband was not a financier, and Carlotta had many needs for money. As the children grew up the needs increased. Carlotta always had needed a great deal of money.

Wainright remembered. It was the joy of his life that he had it to give her. He sent it generously and never questioned what she did with it. And so the years passed and half a century had rolled over Jacob Wainright's head since he built the log house under the gum trees.

Recently a new mine had been developed near his old claim by an enterprising British company. The old man did a little placer mining to supply his simple wants for his fortune was almost gone, and he hoarded the remainder religiously for Carlotta.

When he was not at work he was generally to be found at the new mine. Several stamp mills had been put in and were already at work, and everything was life and stir. It was like the old days to the pioneer of '49. He spent hours at the mine talking to the men, telling yarns of the old days and about the time he made his pile. The boys all liked him and list ned good-naturedly to his glowing stories of his little girl Carlotta.

"The finest lady in Sydney, sir! Why, that gal of mine has trains a yard long to her gowns, and diamonds that 'ud dazzle a fellow blind, but they ain't too good for Carlotty."

Everybody in camp was glad when it was said that old Wainright's daughter had all her plans arranged and was at last coming to visit him. He had written her of his failing health and she had promised that nothing should hinder her coming.

At last Carlotta was coming! Wainright sat in front of the door, smoking and thinking it over. He was bent and feeble, his weather-beaten face seamed with wrinkles. He removed his pipe frequently to cough.

"Fifty year!" he said musingly. "Fifty year since I built this here house. Pretty near that long since I laid Margarita to rest back of the cabin there. Goodness! how pretty she looked a-layin' in her coffin with the posies in her little white hands!" He brushed his trembling hand across his dim old eyes. "I'm gettin' to be an old man—seventy-seven; that's gettin' along—and with this cough a-rippin' the inside of me it ain't likely I'll last over long.

"That's what I wrote Carlotty," he continued, after a few pulls at his pipe. "It seemed as if I just couldn't throw up the stakes without seein' my little gal once more. There's been a gnawin' pain in my breast for years—a heap wuss 'an this cough gives me—an' it's just this everlasting waitin' an' longin' to see Carlotty. I couldn't stand it much longer, no how—I ain't got the grit I used to have. Fact is, I'm too selfish where Carlotty is concerned—I always was."

He chuckled to himself over the last observation, as if the idea pleased him.

"Yes, yes," he murmured smilingly, "I always was a selfish old cuss. I could have fought that Sydney feller when he married my little gal. By gum! she married a swell, though—Carlotty did! They ain't a grander lady in Sydney than my little gal is. Don't seem as if she could be a woman of forty-six. Why, it seems only yist'day she was a-settin' on this here very stone, her black eyes shinin' like stars, a-holdin' out her little hands for the yaller stuff, whilst I was pannin' the dirt."

The old man filled his pipe again.

"Carlotty was born for gold. She took to it naturally it seemed as though she just loved the very glitter of it.

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I knowed it was the yaller stuff that was to make a lady of my little gal—an' I didn't care fer nothin' but to git it fer her. Bein' a fine lady hain't spiled Carlotty. She's a-comin' all the way from Sydney just to see her old dad! Think of that—and me so selfish I haven't been to see her in all these years! But, bless the little girl she's a-comin' to see her old father an' make this here cabin bright as glory.

"Of course, she's a-comin'—I always knowed that she would as soon as she could. She hain't her own mistress like she was with the old man, an' then she has the children to look after. Nothin' ain't a-goin' to hinder her this time, because her poor old dad is ill—wearing out, that's all that ails him—but, for the love of heaven, you couldn't make Carlotty believe it!"

He took a letter from his pocket, and between fits of coughing read it again, his eyes dim with happy tears.

"To-morrow's the day," he murmured tremulously. "Carlotty is a-comin' to-morrow. I thought she'd want to come right here to her dear ma's home fust. She can stay over at the hotel at the Forks if she wants to, but she'll want to stay here for a time at first. She'll want to put flowers on her ma's grave, and sit by it with me, like we used to do, while I tell her how faithful and lovin' her pretty young ma was, an' how I loved my little Carlotty first, just because she was her ma's little gal."

That afternoon the old man tramped far up the trail and was gone until nearly night. When he returned he was loaded down with flowers and vines. He walked slowly, with uncertain step, and coughed incessantly, but he went patiently to work decorating the house for Carlotta's coming. His old hands shook and his steps lagged before he had finished the task, but he worked away resolutely until the last spray was arranged to his liking.

When he had finished his work he went outside and sat down on the doorstep. He wiped the perspiration off his forehead, and a smile of deep contentment stole into his weary face.

The sun had gone down and the shadows were gathering about him, but he did not heed them.

"I don't think I'll have any supper." He laughed softly. "What a silly fool I am—I'm just too happy to eat."

A horseman appeared on the road leading to the mines. The old man did not see him until he was at the very door.

"I got a letter for you over at the Forks," the rider said good-naturedly, as he handed it down. "Can't stay a minute. I expect that daughter of yours started by an earlier train. Good thing, too," he added to himself as he galloped away. "The old man won't last long."

"Yes, yes; that was it," said old Wainright, smiling. "How silly of my old heart to jump like that. Why, for a minute I was fairly scared—I actually was. Carlotty's a-comin' by an earlier train, an' wants her old dad to be at the station to meet her."

He tore the envelope open with trembling fingers, and in the fading light began to read aloud:

"Dear Father: I find that I cannot start at the time I wrote you I would. It seems this is going to be an unusually important season. There is a most eligible young Englishman here for the winter, who is paying marked attentions to Clarissa. I must make the most of an opportunity like this, I am sure your cough is not serious; you know you have often been frightened about it before this. If Clarissa's prospects continue as bright as at present it will hardly be possible for me to visit you this season——"

He read no further.

The shaking hand that held the letter fell nerveless at his side. An ashen grey had crept into his face. He spoke no word, but stared blankly into the gathering darkness.

* * * * *

The moonlight filtered through the swaying branches of the gum trees at the back of the cabin. It fell upon the bent figure of an old man kneeling by the side of a lonely grave. He was a very old man, and he trembled as if with ague.

The night wind blew his white hair about his drawn face, and he stretched his shaking arms across the empty silence. Then his head dropped forward on his breast and he slipped gently to the moist earth.

It was thus that they found him in the morning, a crumpled letter, bearing a Sydney postmark, in his stiffened hand.

G. P. Lane.

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Mr. Bowser's Tribulations.

XX.—HE DOES A LITTLE INVESTIGATION AT HIS COUNTRY PLACE.

When Mr. Bowser had seen the coat-tails of Dusty Bill disappear around a bend in the road and had watched the rising sun until assured it could take care of itself, he went in to breakfast. He found Mrs. Bowser looking very homesick, and the cook had her chin in the air and a frown on her face.

"Are—are we going home to-day?" hesitatingly queried Mrs. Bowser after a bit.

"Yes, that's what I want to know," added the cook.

"Going home?" repeated Mr. Bowser in tones of astonishment. "Of course we are not going home to-day. We have got this place for three months. We only arrived here yesterday evening. You women must be losing your senses!"

"But this awful, awful place!" protested Mrs. Bowser as the tears came to her eyes.

"There's nothing awful about it. It's a farm. There are a few weeds and thistles about, but every farm has 'em. We came out for the pure air, the peace and quietness. We were disturbed last night by a tramp, a dog and an owl, but it won't happen again. We'll have provisions here to-day, and I'll cut down the weeds round the house, and before another twenty-four hours you'll be thankful that I brought you out. Ah! but do you get the scent of the new-mown hay coming through the windows?"

"It's the water in the cellar you smell," said Mrs. Bowser.

"And there's rats down there as big as a barrel," added the cook.

Mr. Bowser had finished his breakfast of sandwiches and pickles. He pushed his chair back, and standing before Mrs. Bowser, he said:

"Woman, I want no more howling. If you want to go back to the city and burn, and roast, and shrivel, and become a mummy, I have no objections, and you can take the cook with you; but, as for me, I stay. I have already gained five pounds. For the first time in ten years I can breathe through my nose. In a week longer, with these gorgeous sunrises and sunsets and sweet-scented zephyrs, I shall be as fat as a pig and on my way to live a hundred years. I am now going forth to inspect our domain."

There was no more to be said. Mr. Bowser had put his foot in it, and would have given a good deal to have been able to back out of the affair and save his pride and dignity; but as there was no chance to do so, he must go ahead.

He clapped his hat on and started out for a walk. It was a farm which was under mortgage instead of under cultivation. The fences were down, the outbuildings in ruin, and the fields were overgrown.

"I ought to be kicked for coming out here," he admitted to himself as he stood and gazed over the landscape, "but I'll try and hang on for three or four days more at the least. By George, but that's a singular insect! That must be what they call a bumble-bee. It's either a bumble-bee or a humming bird."

It was a bumble-bee. He was large and solid of frame, and the pure air of the country had given him a feeling of independence. He went sailing about as if he had all the week to get there and back, and Mr.

Lowering its head, it dashed for Farmer Bowser.

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"Murder! Thieves! Police!" shouted Mr. Bowser, as he danced about.

Bowser followed and tried to knock him down with his hat. The chase led to an old meadow, and with a drone of defiance the bee disappeared in a big bunch of grass.

"Where there's bees there's honey," mused Mr. Bowser as he stood and gazed at the spot. "I don't remember whether Brown said there was any honey on the farm or not, but if I come across a pailful so much the better."

He had started to investigate when his attention was attracted to the bovine they had seen in a field the previous night. He had told Mrs. Bowser it was probably a new milk cow, but now he discovered that it was an ancient-looking one-horned bullock. The animal was hardly more than a living skeleton, and had evidently been turned out to shift for itself, but it had more curiosity than flesh. Seeing Mr. Bowser in the field, it came shambling along to make a closer acquaintance.

He picked up a stick to drive it away, but the bullock seemed to be without fear. Lowering its head and uttering a loud bellow it dashed for Farmer Bowser, and he turned and fled for an old strawstack not far away. He reached it far enough ahead to climb to the apex and escape the horn, but for two long hours the bullock stood guard below and kept him up there. The two hours might have been four had not a tramp, who was looking for a turnip patch, entered the field and driven the creature away.

"What're you doin' out here in the country?" he asked, as Mr. Bowser came down.

"Taking a holiday," was the reply.

"Hired the farm?"

"Yes."

"Got the fam'ly out?"

"Yes."

"Well, old chap, I've long wanted to meet the biggest fool in the world, and I fancy I'm lookin' at him now. A man who'll come out to a place like this for a holiday has either got sawdust in his head or is hidin' from the cops. That bullock must have took you for a cabbage head."

"You will keep your opinions to yourself, sir!" stiffly replied Mr. Bowser, "but here's sixpence for driving that brute off and releasing me."

"Thanks, old chap. Don't you want to hire a man by the month?"

"What for?"

"To help you enjoy the landscape and keep the butterflies from stealin' your hat!"

When the tramp had gone, Mr. Bowser busied himself for half-an-hour in throwing stones at the one-horned bullock, which had retired to a distance, and seemed to be plunged into meditation. He could hit him every time, but the stones gave forth a hollow sound, and were totally disregarded, and the sport was abandoned after a time for a closer investigation of that bumble-bee's nest. The only way to find a nest in the grass is to look for it.

Mr. Bowser advanced as bold as a lion, and began to paw at the grass. He presently heard a sound like a child's rattle, but gave it no attention until about two hundred overgrown and aggressive bumble-bees suddenly flew up out of the grass and sailed into him. He did not believe they were in earnest until he felt a red hot darning needle enter the calf of his left leg. Before he could open his mouth to yell, the right leg was served the same way.

"Murder! Thieves! Police!" shouted Mr. Bowser as he danced about, and the bees continued to make him jump, and it was not until he got a sting on the chin that he started for the house.

The bees followed him. A bumble bee never lets go of a good thing. They had a good thing in Mr. Bowser. His yells were heard at the house, and long before he got there he saw Mrs. Bowser at the door, and the cook looking over her shoulder. As he came up on the gallop, his ears working and his eyes bulging, Mrs. Bowser cried out for an explanation. He didn't pause to give it, however. He made a half circuit of the house and plunged into an acre of docks and thistles and other weeds, and there the bees left him. He was lying on his back and panting for breath when Mrs. Bowser appeared and exclaimed:

"For heaven's sake, but what is the matter with you? What was all this running about?"

Then she caught a sight of Mr. Bowser's face. There was a lump on his chin, a second under his left eye, two on his neck, and one on his forehead, and about forty more which she couldn't see, but which felt as big as washtubs to him.

"Now you'll start for home, won't you?" she asked as he tried to sit up and groaned like a dying horse.

"Never, woman—never on the face of this earth!" he shouted as he fell back among the weeds.

M. QUAD.

Next Week:

"He Spends His Last Night in the Country."

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The Dream of Arnold Blythe.

The Argonaut.
7th Nov., '99

"The Editor presents his compliments to Mr. Arnold Blythe and returns the inclosed with his best thanks."

On a seat in the Embankment Gardens, Arnold Blythe literary man of no repute, sits, clutching in his hand the fateful paper inscribed as above. He is as near starving as can be, while he feels himself to be a victim to a lack of system as hollow as it is idiotic.

He has hitherto blindly followed such professional finger-posts as "peg away," "never say die," "try something else," thus ever searching for the right Editor as Japhet searched for his father.

And the result has left him penniless, well-nigh shoeless, and utterly exhausted. He knows that he has the article some editor must require, but thanks to an orderless system the editor in question is invariably invisible.

The cold wind comes sweeping up from the river, it searches his thin garments, chills his foodless frame.

He murmurs a name.

"Mami—Mami! God bless my little Mami!"

In sheer inertia his head droops; the stereotyped slip falls from his fingers, and, oblivious of all things, he sleeps.

* * * * *

A busy street in the great city of the burning pavement, much affected by publishers, newspaper and magazine offices, in fact, a mighty literary and journalistic centre. The doors of the various palatial buildings stand wide open as if inviting entry. Some, there are light-hearted, of gay plumage, and on good terms with the world, themselves, and the presiding genii of the temples of knowledge. These pass in and outwith a smile upon their lips, and laughter in their eyes.

But Arnold Blyth, the mocking echo of the words "declined with thanks," ringing in his ears, unwanted, empty of hope and faith, turns in the direction of his home.

Before leaving the magic thoroughfare he is suddenly brought to a standstill in front of an unpretentious-looking house. He could have sworn that as he had passed and re-passed the spot both on this day and previous days without number, no such house existed. Part of the ground floor is a shop, the lower half of the window of which is filled with a wire blind, upon which, in gold letters, is the legend:

"Literary Bureau
and
Registry Office.
Sec.,—
The Hon. Aldwyn Merton."

The man wholly in doubt, despairing doubt before, in his wanderings up and down the street does not hesitate now. Tremblingly opening the modest door he finds himself in a spacious room separated by half-drawn curtains and a counter of polished mahogany from its larger part.

"Your pleasure, sir," said a voice at his elbow, and he turned to see a tall, kindly-looking, honest-eyed man, who evidently had followed immediately upon his own entrance.

For the life of him he could not answer the interrogator who giving his hat to an attendant gently indicated precedence to his visitor in the direction of the inner sanctum.

"Take a chair, Mr.——er—?"

"Blythe," stammered the other.

"Well, Mr. Blythe, my name is Merton, and I need hardly say that I shall be very glad to be of service to you, should you need such service at my hands. What's the trouble?"

The Secretary's whole manner was so delightfully confidence-inspiring; so sympathetic in every way that poor Arnold incontinently surrendered himself to the novel influence.

"Before you speak Mr. Blythe, let me briefly explain the objects of this Institution for I can see you are a stranger to them."

Evidently a keen observer, as well as a large-hearted philanthropist.

"The great need of the day," he continued, "is, as we believe, the promotion of more intimate relations between Author and Editor, whereby both may get exactly that which they want by means of Registers and Lists kept by us of mutual requirements, open to be consulted by either party. This we have found so far to be successful, and it is to help the struggling poorer literary toiler that we mainly address our energies. Now what can I do for you?"

In reply Arnold Blythe simply handed to the other a M.S. Glancing at it Mr. Merton touched an electric bell.

"Bring me A. B. C. lists."

Taking up one of the three the Secretary rapidly ran his finger down the columns, and stopped.

"Now, Mr. Blythe, if you will be good enough to look at this entry you will find that there is an article on the subject treated of by you required by the editor of the 'Metropolitan.'"

"Wonderful," gasped Arnold. "Who thought of it, who perfected the idea?"

"Well, I suppose I may claim the parentage," said Mr Merton, smiling, "but that is a mere detail, the main point is that the results are, so far, satisfactory and encouraging."

"What have I to do now?"

"Simply take this letter which I shall write to the editor of the 'Metropolitan,' and he will, if not already suited, which I do not think he is, be only too glad to come to terms with you. Excuse me a moment while I write the note."

Passing over a current copy of the journal in question to Blythe he proceeded to write the letter.

"There! You'll find Sampson a pleasant fellow, and all I ask of you in return for this is that you register with me every MS. you may henceforth write, while the Editorial lists will be open for your inspection at all

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times during office hours. Fee! my dear fellow, no! When you are a great man, and have big bankers' balances we'll talk of fees; till then *au revoir*, and my best wishes for success."

The hand-shake between the two men was electric, at least for Blythe, and with "Mami" echoing in his heart and new life pulsating through every vein he sped eastward to his destination.

* * * * *

"Mr. Sampson in?"

"Yes, sir."

"Be good enough to give him this letter from Mr. Merton. I'll wait."

"Walk this way, sir, if you please."

"Glad to see you Mr. Blythe. My friend Merton says that you have something I am desperately in need of."

"For what it is worth," said Arnold, "here it is," handing the Editor the MS.

The latter took it and quickly but deliberately read it from start to finish.

"Good! very good! this will suit me admirably. Now I am sure you will understand when I say that I'm horribly busy, so if I may trouble you to take this pay-note to the cashier downstairs," rapidly filling up a printed form as he spoke, "it will no doubt convenience you as it does me. I don't want to drive you away, as I should really like a chat with you but an Editor's time is not made to be trifled with, I assure you, and as you very well know I daresay. Good-bye, and come and see me again, I'll send proofs on to you."

The pay-note duly honoured to an extent Arnold had never dreamed of, and with a speed utterly alien to his sad experience of monthly and even quarterly settlements, he is out in the street again.

How he reached his home he could not say, but there was Mami, with her soft, round little arms to twine about his neck, and to whisper loving nothings into his ready ear. As she lay upon the sofa, looking, in the fading summer twilight, the image of his dead wife, he knelt down by her and as he poured the little streams of gold and silver into her baby lap he prayed, "Oh! God! bless my Mami! Yea, and she shall be blessed."

* * * * *

The wind still blows keenly in the Embankment Gardens and every now and then in marrow-piercing squalls.

Slowly the man wakes out of his fitful sleep, to find the ideal merged in the real; for is there not still in his hand the paper, the words of which burn themselves into his brain.

By-and-by a gardener passing the seat is struck with the strange stillness of the occupant.

Calling a comrade, they raise his head.

In the great awakening only will he meet with Mami.

RALPH ENDERBY.

A THREE-CORNERED SWINDLE.

IT wasn't what a conservative old lawyer would call a straight case. I had been sent to London to look up a sharper and make him disgorge for the benefit of the heirs of another sharper.

The wife of one John Saunders, an Englishman who had died abroad several years previously, had put her claims in the hands of a Dublin lawyer. This Saunders had been mixed up in a big swindle before leaving England.

Something like £20,000 had been reaped from it, but his partner in the transaction had gobbled up most of it and had also managed to pull his neck out of the noose, while Saunders had been hunted out of the country. It was the claim of one swindler against another—no more, no less.

The evidence we had, consisted of a number of papers to which both names were attached. The name of the living partner was Smallwood, and it was understood that he had set up as a money-lender. These papers criminated Smallwood in a sense, but in case he was defiant we could not push the case against him.

After some little trouble I found Smallwood and his den. He was a burly, big man, with a loud voice and a domineering way. In assisting to penetrate that swindle he had had a narrow escape, and he realised that in a way he was still under the surveillance of the police, but I put him down as a man not to be easily frightened. I found I was right in this. When I had stated my errand, he laughed in my face and called me a fool. Between ourselves he did not deny the swindle. On the contrary, he boasted of the neat way in which it had been worked. He had furnished the brains, and John Saunders was the catspaw.

He had secured £19,000 of the money and escaped the law, while his partner had fled to a foreign land with the remnant and died among strangers.

"My dear sir," he said, as he smiled and rocked to and fro, "you were a fool to come on any such errand. You have papers, but I would not give you the price of a dinner for them. I am solid, and you can't disturb me. Go to Scotland Yard, go to the lawyer, do what you will, and I shall only laugh at you."

Neither Scotland Yard nor the lawyers could help me in the case. While it couldn't be called blackmail, it was an attempt to squeeze money out of a swindler.

The one interview satisfied me that my mission was a failure, and I bade Mr. Smallwood good-day with as much courtesy as I could assume. It was about lunch-time when I left his office and I dropped into a modest restaurant for a light meal.

I had scarcely got seated when a stranger who had a seedy-genteel look about him asked permission to take the opposite side of the table, saying that he had some information to give me. When we had begun on our meal, he said:

"I saw you leave old Smallwood's office and followed you. Has he done you a bad turn?"

I did not give my case away in replying, but gave him to understand that he had refused to do the square thing by me.

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"He's a cur, a cheat, a swindler, and all that's mean and contemptible!" continued the stranger, with a good deal of feeling. "He has cheated and wronged me, and I can get no satisfaction. To-day, however, I learnt of an incident in his past life that will give me a good hold on him. I must go to Liverpool to complete my information. If you will go along and become responsible for expenses, I will share the information with you."

For awhile I was chary of the man, thinking he might be in the pay of Smallwood, but I finally decided that I could lose nothing by tr sting him.

Smallwood had once lived in Liverpool under another name and had been guilty of a crime for which he had to flee to Brazil and remain there for several years. This man, who gave the name of Duff, proposed to go down and look up the matter and put the police on the scent. He was going to do this out of revenge, but in my case I had no revenge to gratify. I thought it might be a good thing to hold over Smallwood as a bluff, however, and I promised to reward Duff if anything came of it.

In the course of a couple of hours I returned to the money-lender's office. He greeted me affably and laughingly said:

"I have heard that you Irish are a persistent race, but in this case you are simply wasting your shoe leather. I suppose you have come to make a new offer?"

"I have come about that Liverpool affair," I replied, and I went on and stated the nature of his crime and the name he used to sail under.

The shot told. The man grew nervous and pale-faced, and when I had concluded he said:

"How you secured your information I do not know, but I will frankly admit that it is partly correct. I have little fear that the police would meddle with me at this late date, but I do not care to have the affair stirred up. I am willing to make a fair financial arrangement with Saunders' widow."

That was a matter to be talked over at another meeting. I was a bit surprised that Smallwood should give in so quickly, but concluded that the Liverpool affair was rather serious and that like a man of sense he preferred to part with a couple of thousand sooner than have it resurrected.

He had rooms over his office, and I was to dine with him on the next evening but one at eight o'clock, and the matter of restitution would be arranged. I went to the place appointed by Duff to meet him, but he was not there. I had given him my address, but he did not call on me. As a matter of fact, I never saw him again. After he had played his part he vanished.

When I made my third call on Smallwood, I was cordially received, and while waiting for supper to be served we came to an understanding. He was to give me two thousand pounds for Saunders' widow, and I was to give him a receipt in full.

He grew sociable and jolly as the affair was concluded, and my glass was no sooner empty than he pressed me to drink again. Of a sudden things began to whirl, and then came a blank. When I recovered consciousness, it was morning, and I was lying on a bed in a strange room.

My head buzzed and ached, my throat was as dry as paper, and as I rolled out of bed and attempted to stand my knees gave way and let me down. A strange man came to me and talked, and I was given something to drink, but it was late in the afternoon before my brain was clear enough to understand things.

As I sat up on the edge of the bed and wondered what had happened and where I was, a quiet spoken man who had the look of a doctor entered and sat down beside me and felt my pulse and said:

"You will do now if you keep quiet. Let me say for your encouragement that cases just as bad as yours have been cured in three months. The great point is to avoid excitement."

"In the first place, where am I?" I asked.

"In Dr. Colwell's private lunatic asylum," he replied.

"Who brought me here?"

"Your friends. The loss of your money in that Peruvian speculation unbalanced your mind. You will be well car d for here, and if you aid me as you should. your detention will not last over three months."

"I see how it is," I said as I looked him straight in the eye. "I am indebted to Smallwood for this. He drugged me and had me brought here that he might have t me to fix up his affairs and get away. I demand my liberty this instant!"

"Come, come," he replied in a coaxing way as he patted me on the shoulder. "I know no one named Smallwood. Your friends in Beacon Street brought you here, and Dr. Henry made out the papers. All was perfectly regular. Let us have no excitement. Dinner will be ready in half-an-hour. Meanwhile think it over."

In that half hour I thought it out. Smallwood had drugged and abducted me. It might or might not be a private lunatic asylum, but the man had surely been bribed to keep me for a time. If I made a fuss, it would be the worse for me. If I remained passive, I would be set at liberty as soon as the money-lender left the country.

I decided to make the best of things, and when the doctor returned I was very quiet. The two of us ate supper together in a small room and were waited upon by an old woman. He called me Mr. Perrine, and, according to his talk, I was a member of a mercantile firm in London. Next morning I was taken to walk in a narrow garden surrounded by high walls. I got sight of no other person, nor could I make out what sort of place I was in.

During the day I had the use of a sitting-room off my bedroom. It looked out on the back yard, and the windows were barred. I was given plenty of reading matter, and the doctor played chess with me, and taken altogether the time did not pass unpleasantly. In the three weeks I was in the house I saw only the doctor and the old woman.

At nine o'clock one evening I was told that my cure was complete and ten minutes later was being driven away from the building in a closed carriage. After an hour's ri le I was set down in a street in Whitechapel, and had I been backed up by all the police in London, I could not have found the house where I had been held captive.

Smallwood had been gone a week—gone no one knew where. While I do not believe there was any truth in the Liverpool story told me by Duff, the money-lender was more afraid of me than he need have been and had played me a pretty little trick to give himself time to settle up his affairs and move on.

I did not go to the police officially, but I did tell the story to a detective on the quiet. How they would have regarded it at Scotland Yard may be judged from what the officer said to me. At the end of the story he winked and grinned and observed:

"What born liars some men are!"

C. B. Lewis.

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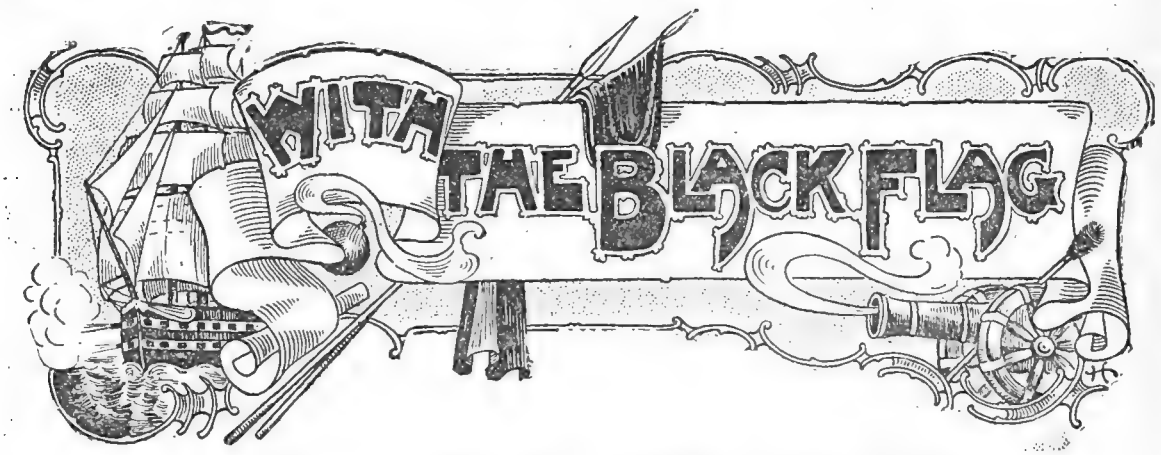

A ROMANCE OF LAND AND SEA.

By William Westall.

Author of "With the Red Eagle," "The Phantom City," "Nigel Fortescue," etc., etc.

SUMMARY.

Major Wyvenhoe leaves England on the *Campanella* with a detachment of troops, raised by Major Barnish, to help the Venezuelans in their struggle for liberty. Major Barnish is accompanied on the vessel by his wife. At Cork a detachment of Irishmen is taken on board, together with General Molyneux, who is connected with the Venezuelan Army, his secretary and chaplain. When the vessel has been out a few days Major Barnish meets with a fatal accident, and on that same day a mutiny breaks out among the troops, but it is speedily quelled.

Shortly after this Venezuela is reached, and as Captain Cautley does not know the coast well a pilot has to be obtained, and it is found that Gouroy, one of the chief mutineers, is able to act as such, and the course of the ship is intrusted to him.

On arrival at Pampatar Major Wyvenhoe and Captain Cautley are received by the Governor, General Arismendez, and his second in command, General Urdenetta.

After staying for some time idle at Pampatar, Cautley goes off in the *Campanella* reconnoitring, and on his voyage he captures a large Spanish vessel, on which he finds twenty thousand doubloons. This money he divides, giving Mrs. Barnish a thousand doubloons in part settlement of her claim against the Venezuelan Government for equipping the expedition. The remainder, after paying the wages of officers and men, he hands over to the Governor in trust for the Government, and gets a joint receipt for it from him and Urdenetta.

The next day, after a parade of the forces, Major Wyvenhoe, to his very great surprise, is arrested by order of the Governor, and proceeds to the jetty for the purpose of boarding the *Libertad*, a sloop of war which had just arrived from Angostura with dispatches, as a prisoner.

CHAPTER IX.

Major Wyvenhoe Arrested—The Reason of the Arrest.

Arrested by the governor's order, after all that had passed between us, and the money I had spent and the services I had rendered! Impossible, I said to myself for the twentieth time. Yet there I was in custody of a military guard of my countrymen commanded by a brother officer, a circumstance which added to my mortification and disgust.

"You are sure there is no mistake, Clincher?" I asked him again as we were being rowed to the *Libertad*.

"I never make mistakes, major, for a very good reason. I always obey orders and ask no questions, and the order given me under the colonel's hand was to arrest Major Wyvenhoe, take him on board the sloop and leave him there in charge of Sergeant Molloy and the guard. You will be free of the ship, but if you attempt to escape they are to shoot. Now you know as much as I do myself. Very sorry, but duty is duty."

It was clear that no solution of the mystery could be got out of poor Clincher. He had no more intelligence than an automaton nor an idea beyond doing as he was told.

The commander of the sloop, an Englishman of the name of Davis, gave me a courteous reception and a comfortable cabin.

"When are you bringing the other prisoners?" he asked Clincher who could, however, afford no information on the subject.

There were other prisoners, then!

"How many do you expect?" I inquired.

"Three, and you are the first," said Davis.

"Who are they?"

"That is more than I can tell you, but I have an idea that they are people of consequence."

"I am going ashore to make my report. Very sorry, and all that, but duty is duty, you know. I have told the sergeant to treat you with every respect. Very unpleasant, but hope you will come out all right. Good-day to you both," said Clincher, and then, after saluting, went over the side.

The plot thickened. There were three of us in it—or, rather, three victims. Who the others might be I was unable to guess, for though I ran over in my mind everybody I knew, I could spot none who seemed likely. Likelihood, however, was nothing to go by. After the governor's treachery anything was possible. Never in my life had I been so deceived in any man; or, except in Araminta, in any woman. But she at least had a motive which was not far to seek. Arismendez, so far as I could see, had none, unless it were pure malice.

Had somebody been poisoning his ear—Urdenetta, for instance? But no, Urdenetta was his enemy, the last man in the world to whom he was likely to listen, and though Arismendez was cruel and vindictive, I had always found him straightforward and above board. Moreover, from the very beginning of our acquaintance, he had treated me as a friend.

I gave it up and tried to think about something else, with so little success that I thought about nothing else.

Presently Ready came with my kit.

"What news, John?" I asked eagerly.

"None that amounts to much, sir. I went to the governor's house, thinking I might hear something. But it was surrounded by troops and they would not let me

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pass. All I heard was that there is some sort of difficulty between the governor and General Urdenetta."

On this it occurred to me that one of the other prisoners might be Urdenetta, though why I should be put in the same boat as a fellow whom I detested and with whom, as Arismendez well knew, I had nothing in common, was a riddle I was utterly unable to read. The only explanation I could think of was that he had had a sunstroke and gone mad.

I sat under an awning on the poop, looking shoreward and trying to calm my feelings by making many cigars. At length something happened.

A boat, filled with red coats put off from the jetty.

"The gentlemen in the stern sheets are the prisoners, I suppose! Do you know them?" quoth Davis, handing me his glass.

"No sir, one of the gentlemen in the stern sheets is Major Hart, of Colonel Rooke's regiment, the other is the governor of Margarita."

"Oh, the governor. Where are the prisoners then?"

"That I don't know, nor much care, but I am glad the governor is coming on board, as I presume he is. I shall insist on knowing what offence is imputed to me, and why I was arrested without a word of explanation and marched through the town under escort like a dangerous criminal or a common deserter."

The boat ran alongside and General Arismendez came on deck, where the guard received him with military honours.

"You here, Major Wyvenhoe!" exclaimed the governor as I stepped forward to greet him.

"I am, your Excellency, and much against my will, as you must well know," I answered indignantly.

"What do you mean, sir?" demanded Arismendez haughtily.

"What do I mean? That is a question I should rather ask you. I mean that I was arrested three hours ago by your order, and brought on board this ship under escort, and I shall feel obliged if you will be good enough to say what you have against me."

"You are labouring under some mistake. I have nothing against you, neither did I order you to be arrested."

"I was right then. I felt sure there must be some mistake. But how did it arise? Captain Clincher, who arrested me, said that he did so in pursuance of a written order under the governor's hand, and you are the governor."

"Unquestionably; but there is another who claims to be governor. It was perhaps he who gave the order."

"Urdenetta?"

"Yes, he is the man; and we are brothers in misfortune, major. I also am under arrest."

"Well, 'pon my word! This beats everything. But how could anybody—who would dare?"

"Urdenetta again. The *Libertad* brought dispatches; one was from Bolivar, superseding me as governor in Urdenetta's favour. But as I was appointed by Congress I refused to be deprived of my office by an inferior authority, and so told Urdenetta. We had hot words. I ought to have had him shot, but thinking it might scandalise you English, and knowing it would embroil me with the Supreme Chief I held back. For all that it was a mistake, and against my better judgment. Take an old soldier's advice, major, if you should ever hesitate about destroying an enemy, give yourself the benefit of the doubt. You will repent it if you don't. If I had killed the hound, or let Ramon kill him, I should have rid the Republic of an incompetent general and myself of a dangerous enemy. For the moment he has succeeded. He went to General English who, I am afraid, is a fool."

"I don't think he is very wise, and he knows nothing of war. He was never more than a commissary general in our service, and for several years has been in trade, I believe."

"Anyhow, he acted like a fool. Urdenetta showed him Bolivar's dispatch, said I had been inciting the native troops to mutiny and persuaded General English to arrest me and send me to Angostura for trial. My house was surrounded by troops, I was unable either to resist or to escape, and here I am."

"What a treacherous scoundrel. I am sorry you did not have him shot. He is the mutineer. But why should he arrest me?"

"Because by telling General English the truth and enlightening him as to Urdenetta's character you might have put a spoke in his wheel, and getting you and me out of the way gives him entire control of the doubloons."

"But you surely don't think he will make free with them?"

"Well, he will perhaps send a thousand or so to Bolivar, and another thousand for distribution among a few office holders at Angostura, and keep the balance on the pretext of providing for the troops, but the troops will get no more pay, and when they have consumed the salt beef and pork taken out of the prize, no more rations, except sugar-cane."

"So Urdenetta has a double motive for arresting us. But Captain Davis spoke of a third prisoner. Who is he?"

"The boat in which I came is alongside the *Campanella*," said Arismendez, drily.

"Cautley?"

"Yes, like you, he might spoil Urdenetta's game, who moreover owes him a grudge for retaining those doubloons."

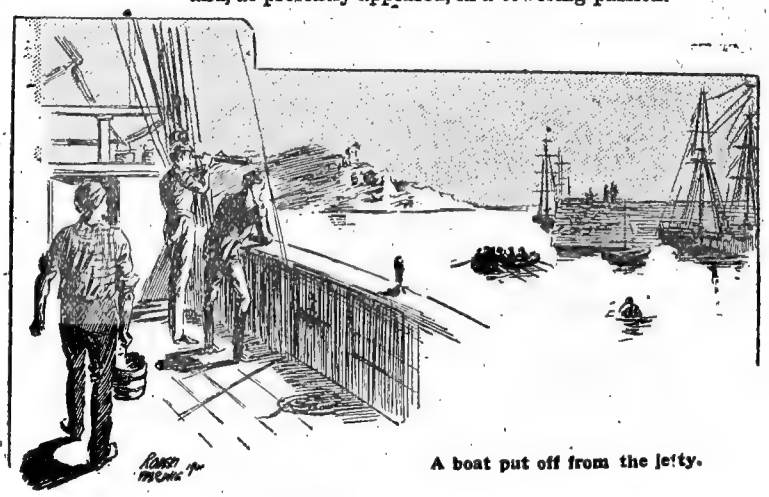
"I wish he had taken more."

"So do I. He might have demanded half, to which, rather than lose the whole, Urdenetta would have agreed, and I should not have objected."

"Cautley was too honest for that. He only demanded what he thought strictly just."

"Honesty does not pay in a South American republic, my friend, and there would have been no dishonesty in El Capitan taking a payment on account of his prize money, of which he will never receive a peso, and insisting on Mrs. Barnish being paid all that is rightly her due. Now she may whistle for it."

While the general was talking I had been keeping my eye on the boat which presently ran under the sloop's counter, and the skipper came on board looking very angry, and, as presently appeared, in a towering passion.



A boat put off from the jetty.

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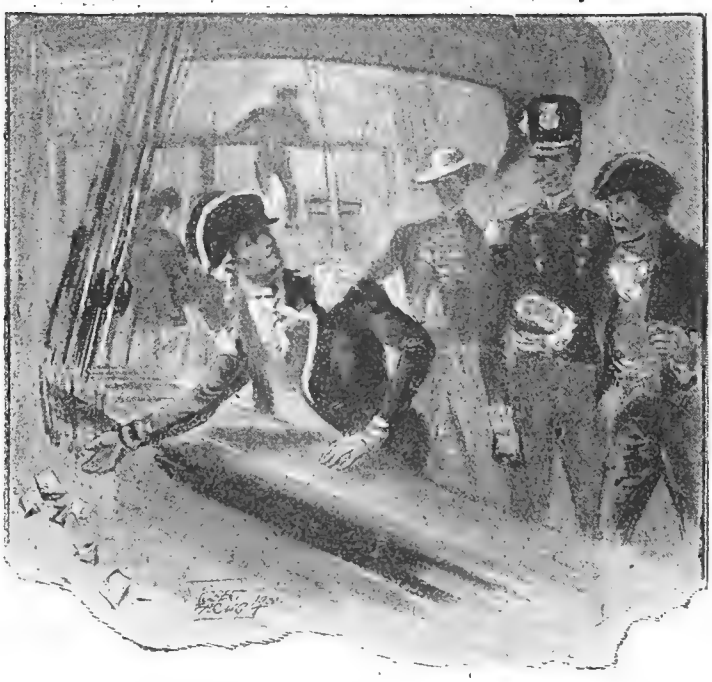
"So you are here!" he exclaimed, on seeing Arismendez. "The very man I most want to see. I have been arrested on my own quarter-deck by these soldiers and, as I am told, by your orders. This is my reward for saving the corvette and capturing a treasure-ship laden with grub. By heaven, sir, I wish that your dirty republic were at the bottom of the sea, and if you were not old enough to be my father I would demand instant satisfaction for the insult you have put on me. Arrested on my own quarter-deck by redcoats. And for what? Can you tell me, Wyvenhoe?"

This tirade being delivered in very broken Spanish, interlarded with English, was fortunately not fully understood by the general, who merely smiled one of his strange smiles. I laughed outright.

"You seem to find it amusing. Well, I don't," added Cautley, "and if you and I were not good friends, Wyvenhoe, I should have something to say which you might not like to hear. If you had been arrested on your own quarter-deck—in your own house, I mean—and bundled into a boat by a lot of red-coated ragamuffins, and never a reason given, do you think I would laugh at you? No, by heaven, and if you will excuse me for saying so, it is most ungentlemanly behaviour to make merry over a friend's misfortunes."



Tore the paper in pieces and threw it overboard.

On this I laughed again, and Arismendez, grasping the situation, though he had not understood a word, joined in, to Cautley's utter bewilderment and disgust.

"What does it all mean? Am I the victim of a practical joke?" he demanded fiercely. "If so, let me tell you——"

"We are all victims, captain, but of a villain, not of a practical joker. I, too, have been arrested in my own house if not on my own quarter-deck, and bundled into a boat by redcoats, so has the governor."

"And that's where the fun comes in, I suppose. But tell me now, was the governor arrested by his own order?"

"No; by order of Urdenetta, who has usurped his place, and having got General English on his side can do as he likes."

"Just like them both; the one is a rogue, the other a fool. How was it managed?"

"So we are going to Angostura!" quoth the skipper when I had explained matters. "What will happen to us when we get there? Are we going to be shot or merely strung up?"

"Neither," answered the General smiling. "I am no great admirer of Bolivar, but he is no fool, and very much alive to his own interests, and though he favours Urdenetta he knows that dealing harshly with me would be to his own detriment and the detriment of the cause. He would lose Margarita, for the islanders amongst whom I have lived all my life, and who regard me as their chief, would secede from the Republic and probably take up arms against us. No, señores, the Supreme Chief knows better than to shoot me or even keep me under arrest. While, as for you, there is nothing against you except some cock-and-bull story that Urdenetta may have invented as a pretext for getting you out of the way."

"But how about those doubloons I gave Mrs. Barnish, and took for the crew and myself?" asked Cautley. "It was rather a strong measure, you know. Might not I be court-martialled for it?"

"Possibly. Though I think you were quite justified. But the receipt we gave you is a complete defence. I hope you did not leave it in your cabin; it is sure to be searched."

"No, it is here in my pocket."

"Good! So long as that can be produced in evidence, Urdenetta, though he may gasconade, cannot hurt you, the more especially as Bolivar is just now very friendly disposed towards the English, whose help he needs. But we must find a safer place for the document than your pocket. Urdenetta is quite capable of having your person searched as well as your room."

"I will give it you then, or to the major."

"That won't do, he may have us searched also, and if he gets possession of the paper and destroys it, as he certainly would, he could give you trouble; for instance, accuse you and the major of having abstracted twice as many doubloons as were actually taken, which would be a sufficient reason for putting you under arrest and enable him to account for less money than he actually received."

"So the receipt must be forthcoming when it is required, and to that end hidden where Urdenetta's emissaries won't find it. The captain of this ship being an Englishman ought to be trustworthy."

"Ought to be, certainly, but until we know him better it would scarcely be wise to trust him with the paper, especially as there is a better way," quoth I.

"What is that?"

"Give it to my servant. I don't think they will search him, and and if they do I'll lay my life they won't find what they want."

"The very thing, where is he?"

"Below. I'll call him."

When John came on deck we walked aft and leant over the rail.

"Take this paper" (slipping it into his hand) "and put it where it cannot be found, even though you are searched," said the skipper.

"All right, sir, I'll put it where it won't be found, even if I am skinned," answered Ready.

"Now we have nothing to fear, and if Urdenetta sends anybody to search you, Señor Capitan, let me advise you to submit with a good grace."

"I always cave in when I cannot help myself, Señor General, and so graciously that you would think I enjoyed it."

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The governor's apprehensions were not long in being realised. Within an hour the sloop was boarded by three Custom House officers and Urdenetta's private secretary.

He gave us all courteous greeting to which we courteously responded, and Arismendez inquired what we could do to oblige him.

"I thank you, Señor General, but my duty is with this gentleman," replied the secretary addressing the skipper, "I am deputed by the governor to request you to hand me the paper which three days ago you obtained from his Excellency and the Señor General. I hope you will not, by refusing, put me to the painful necessity of searching you and taking it by force."

"Really my dear sir, you ask so nicely that I could not refuse you anything. But just one moment, please," said Cautley, and with that he took a paper from his pocket, ran to the taffrail tore the paper in pieces and threw them overboard, and as the wind carried the fragments away there was no possibility of recovering them.

It was done so quickly that the last fragment had floated into the sea before the astonished secretary found his tongue, and then the mask of politeness was dropped; he swore like a trooper, and abused "El Capitan" in the choicest Spanish at his command—and it was very choice.

Cautley merely smiled,

"Was it the paper his Excellency wants?" asked the secretary when he had done swearing.

"What paper?"

"The paper you have just torn up and thrown overboard."

"How should I know?"

"Don't trifle with me, sir, or I'll have you locked up in the carcel and loaded with chains. You know quite well."

"Well, if it is the paper his Excellency wants he ought to be quite satisfied, for he wants it only to destroy it, and it is destroyed."

"But is it, I ask you again?"

"You must find that out for yourself, Mr. Secretary."

"*Caramba!* I believe you are fooling me. I believe the paper I want is on your person all the time. Why should you tear it up rather than give it up? You shall be searched."

"*Con mucho gusto.*"

"Jose, Perez, search the gentleman, and do it thoroughly."

Which they did, stripping the skipper to his shirt, and searching his clothes inside and out, of course without result. Whereupon the secretary tried the oiled feather again.

"Come now, Señor Capitan," he said, coaxingly, "do me the favour to say whether the paper was the paper."

"Undoubtedly, Señor Secretario."

"Ah, I thought so. You mean of course the paper of which his Excellency demands the surrender."

"Not at all. I merely mean that the paper was the paper."

The secretary swore again, and seeing that he could make nothing of Cautley, turned to me and Arismendez, asking if either of us had the paper, and if not, whether we knew where it was. To both of which questions we responded with an emphatic "no," and as a consequence were overhauled, albeit less thoroughly than Cautley had been.

Then the Secretary, after another bout of swearing and threatening us with Urdenetta's vengeance, went away as empty as he had come.

I felt rather concerned, fearing further unpleasantness, but the general laughed, saying we should be troubled no more.

"The secretary won't dare to tell Urdenetta that he has been befooled and knows not whether the paper El Capitan threw overboard was the receipt. He will make up a story—perhaps say that having read it before El Capitan tore it up, he can swear that it was the receipt, and Urdenetta, believing that it has perished, will be satisfied."

"You three gentlemen will be good enough to understand that you are prisoners, not passengers," Diaz said, insolently.

This was not my view. The secretary would no doubt make the best of it and try to extenuate his failure by telling as many lies as might occur to him. But Urdenetta was both jealous and suspicious and quite sharp enough to see he had been foiled and that the document was still in being. Moreover, the skipper's prank might set Urdenetta still more against us and whet his appetite for revenge. Nevertheless, Arismendez was right in one respect; we saw no more of the secretary and heard no more of the paper.

Captain Davis had been an interested spectator of the secretary's proceedings, and when the search party was gone, I told him frankly all that had happened, and he took our part heartily, saying that Urdenetta was a brute, and that we had been badly used.

"You are supposed to be prisoners," he said. "But I shall treat you as friends, and do my best to make your voyage pleasant. Only if you try to escape, I am afraid it will be my duty to prevent you. My orders are imperative."

"No fear of that," I answered. "Cautley and I have had more than enough of Margarita, and it is only by going to Angostura that the general can get even with Urdenetta."

"Well, I hope we shall get there, though it is about even betting that we do not. There are a good many of the enemy's cruisers knocking about, mostly off the Bocas and in the Gulf of Sadness. I was chased three times on the voyage here—once by a brigantine and a sloop, and had a very narrow squeak of it. However, I have made up my mind to blow the sloop up rather than strike my flag. It will be an easier way out of the world than being hacked to pieces by those Spanish devils."

"But you would make a fight for it?" put in Cautley.

"So long as the ship holds together, and I have some good fighting material, the majority of my crew are Zambos, and I have got them into pretty good order too,

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considering what unruly ruffians they are. They like being commanded by Englishmen, probably because, though we insist on obedience, we treat them like human beings; and they are fiends in action."

"You are right. We have seen them at it. What is your armament?"

"Twelve eighteen-pound carronades, two long sixes; and we have an abundance of small arms and ammunition. As I carry dispatches my orders are to avoid fighting. All the same, I would not run away from a single Spanish ship much larger than mine. So we may see some sport before we get to Angostura."

But we were not destined to see sport under this brave captain's command, for on the following morning General Urdenetta's aide-de-camp came on board with a new captain and an order for Davis to take command of the *Campanella*. Which did not please any of us since though it was in some sense a promotion for him, the brig being the bigger ship, he was as sorry to leave the *Libertad* as we were to lose him. The Zambos showed more feeling than I had given them credit for possessing. They insisted on shaking hands with him, and as he went over the side the entire ship's company gave their late captain a hearty cheer.

Captain Diaz, the new captain, was a short, broad-shouldered man, with a swarthy skin, heavy jaws, a big hooked nose, and deep set black eyes rather out of focus.

After reading his commission, signed, of course, by Urdenetta, and making a speech to the crew, he made one to us.

"You three gentlemen will be good enough to understand that you are prisoners, not passengers," he said insolently. "So long as you conduct yourselves to my satisfaction you may come on deck when it pleases you, but if you attempt to interfere with the working of the ship, converse with the officers, or speak to any of the crew, I will have you put in irons."

None of us answered, but Arismendez smiled in a fashion which evidently did not please the new captain, who responded with a scowl and turned on his heel.

"He will put us in irons, will he? *Por Dios*, if he makes any more insulting speeches to me I shall kill him," quoth the general in a fierce *sotto voce*.

"And yet you were advising me only a little while ago to submit with a good grace," said Cautley smiling.

"Ah, well, precept is always easier than practice, and to be threatened with irons by a rascally renegade like Diaz is almost more than I can bear."

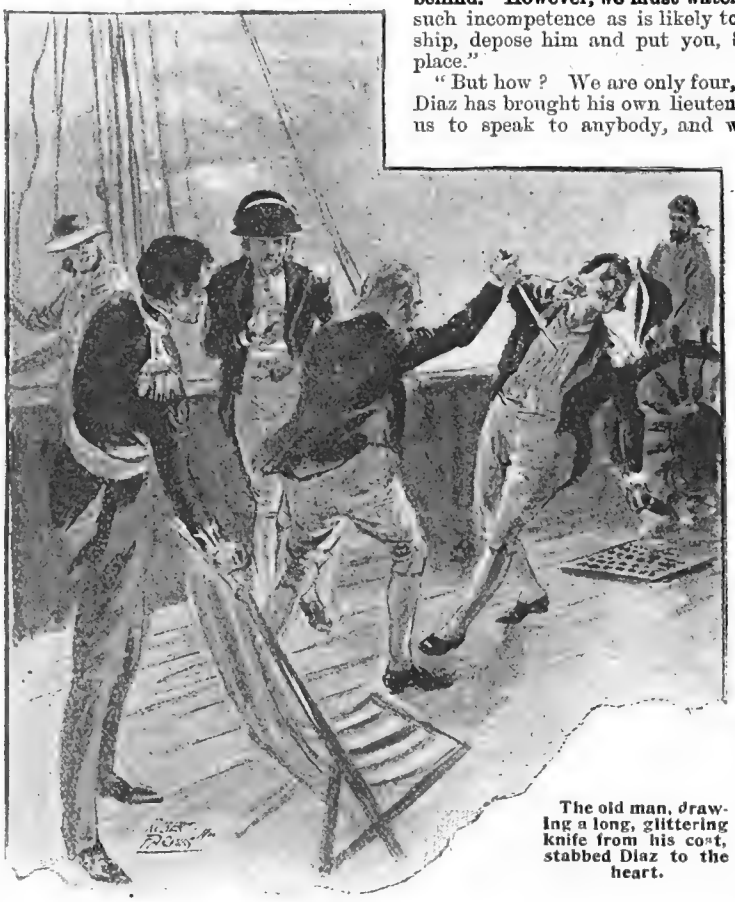
"Renegade! He is a Spaniard then?"

"Yes, for which he is none the worse, there are many Spaniards on our side. But Diaz is a deserter from the royal navy, and deserters are generally either dastards or traitors, sometimes both. Bolivar gave him a post but he did not exactly distinguish himself, and I doubt whether he is much of a sailor. Even with a commander like El Capitan or Señor Davis, it would be difficult to run the gauntlet of the enemy's cruisers, but now, Heaven help us! I anticipate the worst, señores."

"Which is having our throats cut by the Dons, as Urdenetta probably foresaw when he gave Diaz his commission."

"I have not a doubt of it, and there may be worse behind. However, we must watch Diaz, and if he shows such incompetence as is likely to lead to the loss of the ship, depose him and put you, Señor Capitan, in his place."

"But how? We are only four, including John Ready. Diaz has brought his own lieutenants, he has forbidden us to speak to anybody, and will, you may be sure, watch us as closely as we can watch him."



The old man, drawling a long, glittering knife from his coat, stabbed Diaz to the heart.

"An opportunity may occur when the need arises; if not, we must make one. Your servant will be less under observation than we shall, Señor Wyvenhoe; let him, if possible, obtain three or four pistols and some ammunition. They can easily be hidden, and may be useful."

"I have not the least doubt as to his getting them, Señor General," I said. "There are two in my kit, so with two more we shall have one apiece, though twice the number would be better."

At dawn on the following day, the sloop weighed and stood out to sea, but the wind being both light and contrary there was a good deal of tacking, and it was three days before we were in a position to bear up for the Bocas, literally "mouths," a group of rocky islets between the north-east end of Venezuela and south-west end of Trinidad, which marks off the Caribbean Sea from the Gulf of Paria, or, as the Spaniards called it, the Gulf of Sadness.

Cautley averred that Diaz handled the sloop badly, so badly as to suggest a suspicion that he was getting as little speed out of her as he might, instead of all he could, and, another suspicious sign, he kept the Independent flag flying at the mast-head. "It looks as if he wanted to proclaim our character to every vessel we may meet, Spanish cruisers included," I remarked to Arismendez, "though as he will have to die with the rest of us if we are taken I don't see what he can expect to gain by it."

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"If he can show the royalists that he is playing into their hands he will get a pleasanter recompense than death. He may have an understanding with them already, once a traitor, always a traitor; and Diaz is leagued with a worse traitor than himself. The wonder to me is that we have not fallen in with one of the enemy's cruisers before this."

"Maybe we are going to do now, there's a sail on the weather bow," said Cautley. "By Jove, there are two" (looking through his glass). Then, after a few minutes, he added, "A brigantine and a corvette on the larboard tack, and as we are on the starboard tack they will be within shooting distance in less than an hour."

"They may be Spanish cruisers?"

"Undoubtedly, and, what is more, I think they are. Davis spoke of having been chased by a brigantine and a corvette, each of them bigger than the *Libertad*."

Diaz and his first-lieutenant had also sighted the two ships. They were surveying them through their glasses, yet nothing was done, no change made in the *Libertad's* course; no additional sails were set, and the Venezuelan ensign still flew at the peak. This was all the more ominous, as the Spaniards had altered their course, with the evident intention of getting between us and the Bocas.

"What would you do if you were in command, Señor Capitan?" asked Arismendez.

"Show the Dons a clean pair of heels. Wet the sails, set the studding sails, put the brig before the wind, her best point of sailing. A stern chase is a long chase, and as night is nigh I am pretty sure I could give them the slip. I should also clear for action and mount a carronade on the poop."

"And if they overhauled us after all?"

"Do as Davis said he would do; fight to the last and blow the ship up rather than strike my flag."

The general was sitting in a deck chair, we were near him, leaning against the bulwark. Diaz, standing by the wheel, now and then exchanging a word with one of his officers. Most of the crew were in the waist and on the forecastle, the heat below being unbearable.

"Oblige me by fetching your pistols, and sending Ready here, also armed, but return separately," said Arismendez, abruptly.

Guessing that he had a plan, though we had not the least idea what it could be, we obeyed without questioning, and presently returned with the pistols, of course, concealed.

Arismendez rose from his chair, and putting his right hand inside his undress uniform coat, and bidding us follow him, but not too near, went up to the captain.

"Traitor, renegade, spy!" hissed the old man between his set teeth, and drawing a long glittering knife from his coat stabbed Diaz to the heart.

(To be continued.)

THERE is a young man in Leeds so careful that, in calling on his girl, he always knocks, for fear if he came with a ring she might consider it a proposal.

LAVINIA: "Yes, James and I are to become partners for life."

Mabel: "And you will be the senior partner! How sweet!"

"A SMALL physique at times is a great disadvantage to a man," he said. "Recently I was grossly insulted by a big duffer, and I could only pocket the insult."

"In what way did he insult you?"

"He offered me a bribe."

MISS SWANSDOWN (at the ball): "What did you do with my shawl, Mr. Peterkin? I gave it to you to keep half an hour ago."

Peterkin (producing a slip of paper): "Good gracious, what have I done! In a fit of absent-mindedness I took it out and pawned it."

JUDGE: "Your age?"

Lady: "Thirty years."

Judge (incredulously): "You will have some difficulty in proving that."

Lady (excitedly): "You'll find it hard to prove to the contrary, as the church register which contained the entry of my birth was burned in the year 1845."

A FRENCH journal says that a man who had a passion for shooting called one morning to his servant:

"There's a rabbit in the garden, Jacques! Hand me a gun."

"But, sir, it is five o'clock in the morning; everybody is asleep."

"No matter. I'll fire on tiptoe."

BROADWOOD: "Some of the new houses up our way are so narrow that a piano cannot be put in."

Bans (excitedly): "You don't know the rent of the houses next door to them, do you?"

FOND MOTHER: "Children, you mustn't fight."

Willie: "We're playing jeweller, mamma, and Tommy's a clock out of order and keeps on strikin' while I'm trying to twist his face off."

HIGHWAYMAN: "Throw up your hands and give us your money."

Cumso: "How can I do that, you idiot? Do you imagine that I am a contortionist, and can get my nose into my pocket?"

A FARCE was produced in Bannister's time, under the title of *Fire and Water*

"I predict its fate," said he.

"What fate?" said the anxious author at his side.

"What fate!" said Bannister; "why, what can fire and water produce but a hiss?"

"WHAT is an anecdote, Johnny?" asked the teacher

"A short, funny tale," answered the little fellow.

"That's right," said the teacher.

"Now, Johnny, write a sentence on the blackboard containing the word."

Johnny hesitated a moment, and then wrote:

"A rabbit has four legs and one anecdote."

"MY dear," said a sentimental maiden to her lover, "of what do these autumnal tints, this glowing baldric of the skies, this blazing garniture of the dying year, remind you?"

"Pancakes," he promptly replied.

And than she realised for the first time that their two hearts did not beat as one.

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SHORT STORIES ABOUT SEASIDE LODGINGS.

We devote, every week, two pages of *Short Stories* to pithy, humourous anecdotes similar to those which appear in these columns. A prize of £1 1s. will be sent to the reader who submits the best storyette this week, and a copy of "Mystery of the 'Medea,'" by Alex. Vaughan, to each of those whose attempts are used. The anecdotes may be either original or selected; in the latter case the source *must* be stated. The prize of One Guinea offered for the best Storyette in this competition has been won this week by Mr. W. J. Bristow, 119 Stratford Road, Plaistow, Essex. Attempts for this week's prize must deal with Stories about HOLIDAY ADVENTURES, and must reach the Storyette Editor, *Short Stories* Office, Henrietta Street, Strand, London, W.C., by Monday, August 27th. Post-cards only, please.

Wanted to Eat the Cat.

He came down to breakfast and nothing was ready. So he rang the bell.

"Mrs. Perkins," he said when the boarding-house keeper appeared, "what is the meaning of this? Why is breakfast not ready?"

"Well, sir," replied Mrs. Perkins, "I got a nice bit of fish for you, but I'm sorry to say, sir, the cat——"

"Confound the cat! then let me have the cold chicken."

"I regret to say, sir, the cat——"

"Well, then, some eggs."

"There are no eggs, sir. The cat——"

"Hang it all, then, cook the cat and we'll have it all at once!"

W. J. B.

Old and Tough.

"Pretty healthy place this, isn't it, Mrs. Doem?"

"Oh, yes, sir."

"The sea-breezes are considered wholesome, I suppose?"

"They are indeed, sir."

"The place to live in to a ripe old age, eh?"

"You're right, sir."

"Yes, I gathered as much by this spring chicken. I should be glad if you'd take its ancient carcase to the steam saw-mill and ask them kindly to dissect it for me."

E. C.

The Reason Why.

Being a family that is generally going away for a fortnight summer holidays, we went this year to a pleasant little seaside town on the coast of Kent, and we obtained good lodgings there during our first week's stay. We had beautiful weather, but towards the beginning of the second week it turned out very wet and we were compelled to stay indoors. Seeking for anything to pass the time we determined to get a little music and singing.

A piano being in our room we commenced our little concert. The first tune we struck up was that popular chorus, "Home Sweet Home." You know how the words go: "There's no place like home, etc."

We kept singing this chorus over and over again until we got tired of it. Well, when we saw our landlord next he was in a terrible rage.

The reason for this became quite evident to us all after a time.

I. E.

Caught.

A lancashire man who was staying at a boarding-house in Blackpool, suspected his landlady's "cat" had been tampering with his whisky.

As a test he called his landlady and said to her: "Don't let your cat touch this bottle labelled whisky; it contains a deadly poison, mixed with whisky, which I keep for cleaning purposes."

On hearing this, his landlady exclaimed: "Oh, send for the doctor, I'm dying."

J. C.

Bowser at Brighton.

Mr. Bowser (across the seaside boarding-house table): "Will you pass the tin-opener, Mrs. Skinnem."

Mrs. Skinnem (severely): "Do I understand you rightly, Mr. Bowser, the tin-opener?"

Bowser (suavely): "You do, madam; I wish to open this fruit pie."

A. Y.

How the Tea Went.

Mr. W., a well-known solicitor, in his bachelor days went to lodge with a person whom we will call Mrs. Brown. As an inducement to take the rooms, he was told that he could have a lock-up cupboard to keep his food in, where it would be safe from the depredations of the cat.

However, Mr. W. soon discovered that his favourite pekoe disappeared with alarming rapidity. Having no particular reason for suspecting the domestic tabby, he came to the conclusion that Mrs. Brown must, like himself, possess a liking for that fragrant bohea.

To make assurance doubly sure, he purchased two pounds of tea next time instead of one, and putting one pound as usual in the tea-caddy in the cupboard (which he determined not to touch at all himself), gave out his daily supply from the other pound, which he kept concealed from Mrs. Brown. But, alas! the pound in the caddy kept getting small and beautifully less, until it was all gone!

Then came Mr. W.'s innings. Ringing for Mrs. Brown, he handed her his usual supply of tea in a cup, and producing the empty caddy from the cupboard, he jocularly remarked:

"I see you've finished your pound of tea before I have mine, Mrs. Brown."

The poor woman's face, when it dawned upon her that the vanishing tea trick had been discovered, was a study.

C. R. F.

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Votaries of Mrs. Grundy.

Two old maids were once inspecting some seaside lodgings, which stood back a considerable distance from the sea. Being difficult to please, they raised all sorts of objections to the rooms. At last one of them said they couldn't possibly live in such a house on account of the bathers. The landlady pleaded the distance from the offensive sight, which was half a mile or more.

With one accord, both old maids raised their hands in pious indignation, with the remark:

"True, true, the distance is great, but we could see them distinctly with a telescope!"

W. B. H.

Rather High.

I HAD only been at my seaside apartments one day when I received a telegram to return home immediately. I at once informed my landlady, and asked that my bill should be made out. A few moments later it was put before me, and the following is a copy:

To Mr. Holdsworth, from Bradford,
July 17

Bedroom...	...	...	...	3s.
Attendance	...	...	...	1s.
1 Dinner ...	...	...	...	2s.
Drinks, etc.	...	...	...	2s.
				25s.

"Good gracious, landlady!" I exclaimed. "whatever is this. Twenty-five shillings for one day?"

"Oh! I beg your pardon," she replied, smiling, oh, so innocently; "I have added in the date by mistake."

E. H.

Burnt Out.

LAST summer we went to a northern seaside resort. Necessity compelled us to take moderate apartments. The landlady was genial, and soon prepared tea. A young girl (a niece) came to clear away.

As she passed my chair she dropped a plate of cake, and, as I stooped to help her pick it up, she put a piece of paper in my hand.

Motioning me to keep silent, she withdrew from the room.

The paper read:

"Do not stay in this house to-night; you will be sorry if you do. There are many other places."

We came to the conclusion that the girl had quarrelled with her aunt, and had done this for spite. Being comfortable, we did not feel inclined to move.

About eleven o'clock she brought us our candles, and shaking her head, looked at me meaningly. I felt somewhat nervous, and sat at the window for some time. At last I went to sleep.

I woke up fighting for breath. The room was full of smoke. I tried to wake my wife, but could not. I got to the door and opened it.

The smoke poured in, and the stairs were enveloped in flames.

I was dragged through a window. I struggled to get to my wife, but 'twas impossible.

Poor Minnie was lost. The people of the house were safe.

The girl afterwards confessed that they set the house on fire to obtain the heavy insurance.

A. G. C.

Then They Laughed.

IT was my first day at dinner at my seaside apartments, and I was placed opposite a roast goose. The lady of the house was sitting by my side. Seeing the goose, I remarked:

"Shall I sit so close to the goose?"

But, thinking my words a trifle equivocal, I turned to the lady and said, in a most inoffensive tone:

"Excuse me, madam, I meant the roast one."

Somehow, my landlady and I didn't get on very well together after that.

E. H.

The Literary Landlady.

A REPORTER was in the habit of using his cuffs on which to make professional notes. His landlady, who undertook, in addition to boarding him, to do his washing, was much puzzled with the hieroglyphics she found inscribed on her lodger's linen, and she after a while managed to make out their meaning. One day she astonished the newspaper man by saying:

"Your last washing was quite interesting, sir, only you don't give me enough sporting news."

Evidently that landlady liked to have "a little bit on," as they say in racing circles.

C. R. F.

A Chilly Sort of Bed.

SOME years ago the National Eisteddfod was held at a popular Welsh watering-place. The festival attracted large crowds, and the town was terribly overcrowded. The only sleeping accommodation I and three friends could obtain was a bath-room. When retiring I found that my bed was a mattress placed over the bath. At least it had been so arranged by the landlady, but my villainous "friends" had removed the bath cover and mattress, and filling the bath with water, had cunningly spread the sheets over the watery trap.

When I leaped on them I fell into eighty gallons of cold water. I splashed, gasped, and struggled, the sheet became wound round my arms and legs, and I was in real danger of drowning, when my companions rescued me.

W. B.

The Scotch Calendar.

AN anecdote is told of a certain Highland hotel-keeper.

He was one day bickering with an Englishman in the lobby of the inn regarding the bill.

The stranger said it was a gross imposition, he could live cheaper in the best hotel in London, to which the landlord with nonchalance replied:

"Oh, nae doot, sir, nae doot; but do ye no ken the reason?"

"No, not a bit of it," said the stranger, hastily.

"Weel, then," replied the host, "as ye seem to be a sensible callant, I'll tell ye: there's 365 days in the Lunnon hotel-keeper's calendar, but we have only three months in ours!

"Do ye understand me noo, frien'? We maun mak' hay in the Hielans when the sun shines, for it's unco seldom she dis't!"

C. R. F.

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Little Mrs. Hope.

THERE were twenty of us making up the party at a country house for the shooting season, and it so happened that while all were of course well-known to host and hostess seven or eight were strangers to each other until introduced at the house.

I do not think there were over three or four who even knew little Mrs. Hope by name, or could tell anything of her past. Nor did a great deal leak out about her father after she had been generally introduced and had come to be a favourite with both men and women.

She was *petite* and fair. She had a baby-face and big blue eyes, and your first impression of her was that she was a child and a very innocent child at that.

In the billiard room it was whispered that she was a distant relative of Colonel Saunders, our host, and hat she had married a scamp and had been so ill-used that a separation had been sought for.

It was generally agreed that it must have all been the husband's fault and that the man who would ill-treat such a light-hearted, baby-faced wife deserved something beyond contempt.

She was by long odds the best looking woman among the eight or ten, but as she was not given to flirtation and as she looked pretty without artificial means she was forgiven for her handsome face and became a general favourite.

The man who leaves business for a week or two for a holiday seldom takes along jewellery or money of any account, but nine women out of ten must carry their diamonds wherever they go.

There was a good display of gems at Rose Hill with all except little Mrs. Hope. She had two or three rings and a bracelet or two and made a poor show compared with the rest.

This was corroborative evidence that she was none too well off, financially, but she did not display the slightest feeling of envy, and no hints were thrown out to hurt her feelings.

A country house, full of wealthy guests, is a paradise for a thief, and the colonel warned the ladies from the beginning to be careful of their jewellery. All of them agreed to act upon the advice and then, womanlike, left every ornament lying about.

On the fourth day of the party a lady named White missed three valuable rings which had been left lying on a table in her room. They had been taken in broad daylight while the ladies were on the lawn and while the maid was temporarily absent from the room.

It was impossible that any outsider could have got into the house, and it seemed impossible to trace the thief to any particular servant.

Counting maids, valets and the household, there were about twenty people in the house apart from the guests. Mrs. White's loss was kept a secret for several days from all but the host and hostess, but the colonel's quiet detective work brought no reward.

The second loss was more serious. A Mrs. Willmere left her jewellery lying about after dinner and at bedtime discovered that she had been robbed of every single article.

The value was at least £3,000, and as she and her husband were both excitable people the loss could not be kept quiet.

Between the finish of dinner and bedtime we were scattered about the house and lawn, with the servants moving to and fro, and no stranger could have entered the house without being seen.

The bedroom window was open but no ladder had been used.

It seemed to be plain enough that some servant had secured the jewellery, and one by one the entire lot were summoned before the colonel's court of inquiry and interrogated.

There wasn't one without a good character, nor could suspicion justly attach to any single one. It was long after midnight before we got through and next morning the sergeant from the police station was summoned. He couldn't suspect one of the guests, and he could find no grounds for suspecting one of the servants, and he got out of it by looking wise and saying that Mrs. Willmere had probably mislaid her ornaments. Unfortunately for her she was rather absent-minded, and we presently came to accept the theory, though she searched her rooms over and over again without discovery.

The losses did not break up the party as might have been the case. The colonel and Mrs. Willmere came to

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a mutual understanding. I think the detective advised them to call it a "mislay," and thereby put the thief off his guard.

Colonel Saunders insisted that every jewel of value should be locked up in the family safe, and when this had been done every guest became a Sherlock Holmes.

There were twenty guests and twenty theories. Everything from an owl to the stable-boy was under suspicion.

The detective's theory, as he gave it to the colonel privately, was that a smart thief disguised as a lady's maid or upper servant had entered the house and committed both robberies. Of all the theories this was the most absurd, but of course the man felt bound to make a move of some sort.

The jewellery had been locked up for four days, and things had quieted down, when the colonel started to produce it in honour of a government official who was to arrive that evening.

I say he started to, because he no sooner attempted to unlock the safe than he discovered that the bolts had been shot. As he pulled the door open he uttered a groan, and the sight of his haggard face was evident enough that something was wrong. The safe had been opened by means of a key, but had not been locked again. Every article of jewellery was gone, and the value of the lot was not a penny under £10,000.

In seeking to render his guests safe the colonel had helped to despoil them. It was impossible to say at what date the robbery had happened, and the only thing to do was to telegraph up to London for a detective.

While waiting his arrival no servant was allowed off the grounds, and of course no guest could well leave while under fire. It was a painful position for every one, and the detective rather added to it when he got to work. So soon as he was in possession of all the facts he said to the colonel:

"These robberies were committed by one of yonr guests. They must all assemble in the drawing-room and submit to have their rooms searched."

Rather than subject them to such an indignity the colonel offered to pay the full loss out of his own pocket, but this no one would hear of. All were willing for the search to go on, and host, hostess and detective made it.

Nothing was found. The detective clung to his theory, however, and took another look at the rooms and was given the names of their occupants. There were three rooms which communicated, and those three were occupied by the colonel, his wife and little Mrs. Hope.

The door between the rooms of the colonel and Mrs. Hope was bolted on her side and had been for years.

This door caught the eye of the detective, and after an examination of the bolt, he said:

"This bolt has been worked within three or four days, as any locksmith will tell you, and this door has also been opened."

"Do you know what you are saying?" sternly demanded the colonel.

"I do, sir. You carry the key of the safe in your pocket. To get that key someone has entered your room by this door at night."

"But Mrs. Hope's effects have been searched along with the rest."

"Her effects—yes. She has the jewellery on her person. Let your wife search her."

The colonel was furious and his wife indignant. They would answer for little Mrs. Hope as for themselves.

"I can do no more," answered the detective. "One of your guests is the robber, and it is the guest occupying this room. If you will call her up here, I believe I can break her down in ten minutes."

After long hesitation little Mrs. Hope was called up.

She came smilingly, and no pair of eyes ever revealed greater innocence. A layman would have sooner suspected a toddling babe.

"Now then," began the detective, "you are the robber. You took Mrs. White's jewellery, and you robbed the colonel's safe. You got the key from his trousers by opening this door. You have the jewellery on your person."

For the space of thirty seconds the baby-faced woman regarded him with wonder, indignation, fear, and anguish.

Then she gasped for breath and sank down on the ground.

"Search her," said the detective as he left the room.

Ten minutes later he was called in. The little woman lay weeping on the sofa, and the missing jewellery was spread out on the table.

"Heaven help us!" said the colonel as he looked from the officer to the recovered treasure and back.

"We must help ourselves," replied the man as he looked at the woman with pity in his eyes. "Mrs. Saunders, your maid must go. You must settle the price with her. She must get away as soon as possible, and the plunder must be found in her room later on. She will get safe away."

Three hours later the jewellery was "found" in the maid's room, and everybody else was cleared of suspicion and made happy. The maid had been gone two hours, and the detective doubted whether she could be found in big London, though of course he would use every effort. Little Mrs. Hope was ill for a day or two under the nervous excitement and so had a good excuse for leaving Rose Hill.

So far as I know not one of the guests suspected her. Indeed as the maid had left a written confession before she bolted how could anyone else be suspected? This being the case, you may wonder how I got hold of the inside facts in the case. Well, that's a matter of no concern so long as I have given you the full particulars. Perhaps the colonel trusted me farther than he did the others.

As for little Mrs. Hope, it was want of money, probably, that induced her to turn robber, but I have always tried to make myself believe that she couldn't have realised what she was doing.

C. L.

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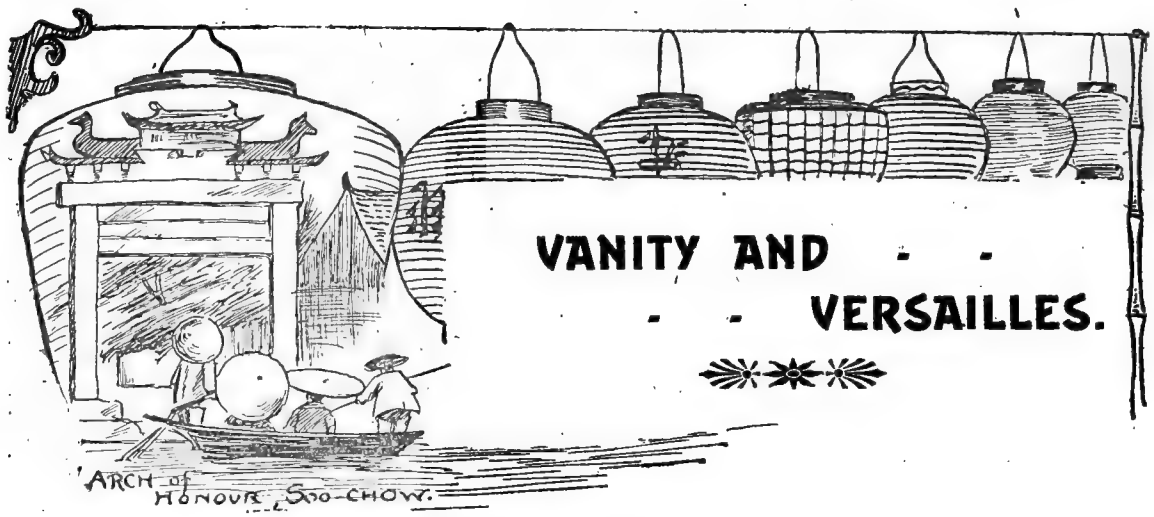

VANITY AND - - - - VERSAILLES.

ROSE LEPEL was a pretty grisette who lived in the Rue Montmartre in Paris and worked all the week at a confectioner's manufactory. She sugared the mirabelles and the violets sent up by thousands from the South of France and arranged them in pretty little boxes with stamped paper and tissue ornaments, with the taste that seems to grow in Paris.

Sunday was her great fête day; then all thoughts of work were put aside and in her pretty grey muslin dress and neat shoes, Rose felt herself the gayest of the gay and the neatest among the many neat and pretty grisettes of Paris.

She had a friend, who was always at her disposal on these holidays, one Henri Marul, a brave soldier in the 4th. Zouaves de la Ligne. Henri had never yet had a chance of proving his bravery, and so it was an unknown quantity, but in France all soldiers are "brave soldiers" as soon as they are adorned by the loose red trousers of the Zouaves, and they march about looking intensely fierce, carrying pain and pleasure and admiration to the hearts of the Parisian grisettes.

This fine morning in June Henri had arranged to call for Rose early in order that they might spend the whole day at Versailles, in the gardens and park. When he called for her in the Rue Montmartre Rose was ready and waiting, with a charming little basket on her arm, containing their *déjeuner* to be eaten at twelve o'clock.

"But what have you there, my angel?" cried Henri, trying to examine the contents of the basket.

"Wait! and you will see at Versailles," said Rose, "it is something of the most ravishing, I assure you. How the sun shines and how the sky is blue. Henri, I long to be in the gardens, by the little lake at Versailles."

"Come, then," said Henri, and they walked fast through the busy, bright streets that had an air of festivity, even so early, to the Place de la Concorde, where on the further side by the big bridge, the steamers stopped. Here they took tickets for Sèvres, the nearest point on the Seine to Versailles.

"It is fortunate," said Rose, "that we have started early. On such a fine day all the world will go to Versailles, especially when the great fountains play as they will this afternoon."

They started in a few minutes and the river steamer went puffing up the river between the long lines of exhibition buildings on either side. Very frail and insecure these looked, many as yet unfinished, but giving an appearance of brightness and gay colouring, grouped near the towering height of the Eiffel Tower and stretching along in lines of whiteness and gilding and quaint, fantastic shapes. The steamer passed through all this and passed Passy and St. Cloud, out to the fields and gardens beyond the city limits.

At last they stopped at the Bridge of Sèvres and got off the steamer at the pretty country landing place. Many other passengers did so too, among them a lady smartly-dressed and with wonderful curly golden hair. This lady had already absorbed much of Henri's attention on the boat; this was the worst of this gay Zouave, though faithful in his heart to Rose, whom he intended to marry as soon as his term of military service was ended, yet he was continually admiring other people and causing Rose's neat little bodice to flutter anxiously with jealousy.

"Must not everyone admire also the manly graces of her brave Zouave? Ah, in this life no pleasure is without its thorn!"

The lady, however, was at present engaged with friends of her own; with much talking and laughing they all went up the steep incline from the landing place to the road above, where the steam tramway from Paris passed on its way to Versailles. Henri and Rose climbed up on the outside of the tramway, it was cheaper and pleasanter than the inside; the lady with golden hair went inside, so for the time, temptation was removed from the neighbourhood of our gay Zouave.

The tramway stopped in the Place d'Armes at Versailles, by the great stables of the Palace; everybody got out and streamed across the great, open, glaring Place to a side door, the entrance to the picture galleries on the right and straight through to the fountains and gardens.

Oh, shades of ill-fated Marie Antoinette and her frivolous Court, how must you feel to see the crowd you despised so much, troop over the parterres and terraces sacred to Royalty, to see little booths for refreshments put up even on the great terrace, and a merry-go-round in the Lime Tree Avenue!

Henri and Rose thought little of kings and queens, to-day was sufficient for them; they hurried down across the terraces to the wood by the lake and they ate their *déjeuner* there, in the cool shade of the forest trees.

Google

Rose produced a delightful *paté* from her basket and a bottle of Médoc. Henri bought cakes and fruit from a stall in the gardens and they had a nice little meal.

"All that there is of most charming," said Rose, and they laughed and talked while the shadows of the great limes fell as unconcernedly on this little bourgeois lunch as on the great ladies of the French court long ago.

"At half past four the fountains begin," said Henri, "and before that, the band plays in the wood; let us go there, it is more gay. I see already many people among the trees."

So they went, Rose with rather a heavy heart, for the golden-haired lady would be sure to be where the crowd met. Her fears were justified; there she was, much finer and more fashionable than poor little Rose.

Henri twisted his moustache in a fine manner and put on his most soldierly air; the lady looked for a chair, and he darted forward to supply one, receiving in thanks a bow and smile that constituted an acquaintance.

Poor Rose was quite in the shade henceforth; certainly she had also a chair paid for by Henri, but she sat on it alone and neglected, and all the world knows it is not gay to sit alone in a crowd. Henri had forgotten her—the sky was black, not blue; what a most detestable place to spend a holiday in!—was this much talked-of Versailles?

At last Henri and the lady left their chairs and went down towards the lake, she having expressed a desire for a little "promenade" on the water. Rose followed them and remained on the bank, the faithless Henri merely saying the boat was too small for three.

Below the fountains there is a long, wide artificial canal, with a round pond at either end. At one end there is a boat-house where canoes and boats can be hired for one franc fifty centimes the hour.

The specimens of rowing one sees are not very good; some oars fly wildly up without touching the water—others are forced in with severe determination till it seems as if they would never come up again. Then again there are many collisions and clashings of oars, but the water is shallow and the master boatman looks on with serene unconcern. Should a boat upset, he will go to the rescue, but for nothing less can his superior mind be disturbed.

Henri was one of the worst rowers, and the golden-haired lady was evidently not at ease; in starting, he bashed up against a small pier to which boats were moored and the shock jerked one oar out of his hand. The lady screamed, the people on the bank laughed, which made her furious. However, Henri recovered his oar and, rather red in the face, proceeded out to the centre of the lake. Here all went well.

Henri paddled about and even got so experienced as to make a feeble attempt to feather his oars. He and the lady were evidently on the very best of terms, and as Rose watched them from the bank and heard their laughter, her heart sank within her and she walked away sadly under the trees.

Hark! what was that? A shriek from the lake. Ah, yes, indeed! she turned quickly, and saw Henri's boat in collision with another just in the centre of the round pond.

All would have gone well even then, but the golden-haired lady would not keep still—she stood up in the boat and called loudly for the master boatman. What happened was easily foreseen—a sudden lurch, and over she went into the lake—down, down, to the depth of seven or eight feet: then she rose again, gasping wildly.

The boat, fortunately, with Henri in it, was close by; he leaned over and clutched her by the closest place handy—her mass of golden hair. But what was this? It came off! All the ravishing curls, the entire head-dress with flower-toque attached was left in his hand, leaving a round head covered with very short red hair like a brush. At the same moment, fortunately, the lady seized the edge of the boat, so she was in no danger of drowning. Henri remained paralysed, the golden hair in his hand. Not so the inhabitants of the other boat, who screamed with laughter—so did the spectators on the bank. The lady could do nothing but hold on and gasp out "*Canaille!*" to her tormentors at intervals.

The master boatman soon arrived on the scene in a wide punt, into which he hauled her with scant politeness. Henri restored to her, her golden curls and the episode was ended. So was also Henri's admiration. Alas for fickle Zouaves! he turned his attention to his Rose well-loved, now smiling on the bank, he took her on board his boat and they spent the rest of the day in undisturbed happiness and good-fellowship.

He explained away the episode of the lady with the art of a diplomatist. "All is well that ends well," For Rose it ended well, so she thought it better to forgive and to forget.

As to the lady and the golden hair, she put it on her head again in the welcome seclusion of a little refreshment hut at the park gate, near the boat house, and reappeared charming as ever, only she avoided the neighbourhood both of our friend Henri and the Lake.

SADI GRANT.

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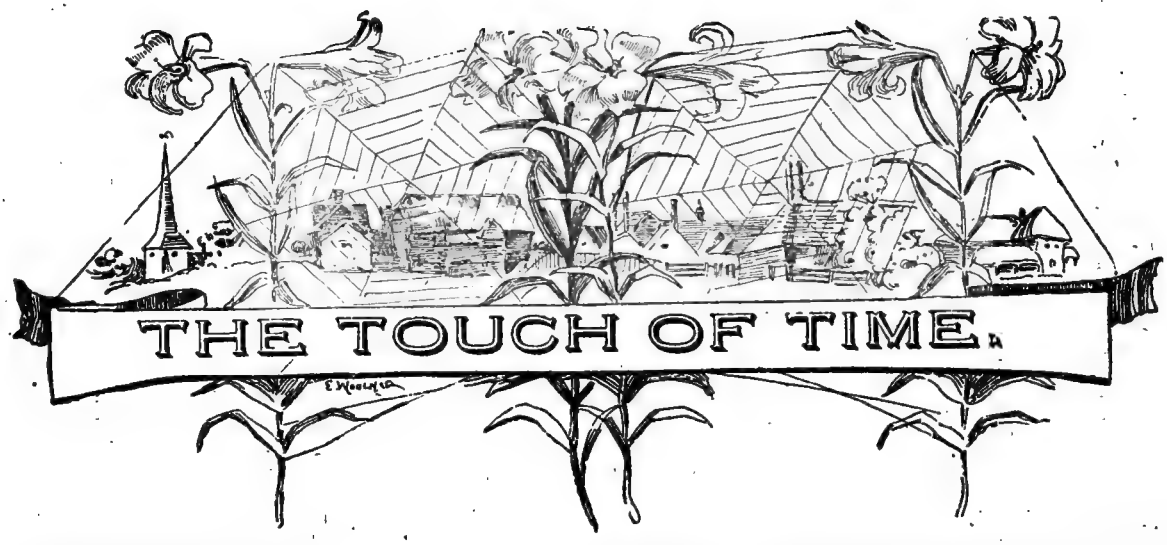

"PLEASANT, isn't it?"

Mrs. Roger Brice looked at her husband, her eyes twinkling with mischievous amusement. She was a woman who had learned to take life as it came to her, and did not worry over what she could not alter.

Perhaps that was the reason why her cheeks were still so round and rosy, and the lines about her eyes and mouth were soft instead of hard.

It was inconvenient to have to wait at this tiny junction of the branch road for four hours, but obviously it could not be helped. Already they had explored the single street of the little settlement twice; but the heat was intolerable, and they had returned to the station, resigned to the inevitable. At least, Mrs. Brice. Her husband's frame of mind was better unexpressed.

Roger Brice was one of those methodical, practical men, who have their whole day's action mapped out beforehand, like a military campaign. No spare moments, no idle musings for him! Not that he did not cultivate leisure to a proper degree.

He took his vacation of two weeks (upon which they were just starting) each year with the same precision with which he read his daily paper, and kissed his wife good-bye before starting for his office in the morning; in short, his whole mature life had been one of monotonous routine. Hence when the complexities of outside existence disturbed his own, as in the present case, he was helpless in his well-bred, well-controlled vexation.

"If Roger only would lose his temper sometimes he wouldn't be so exasperating," his wife had often thought; "but, then, he's kept it bottled up so many years that it would be something awful."

His love for her she never doubted, yet deep in her soul was the longing that something sometime might rouse it to a more fervent expression. Still, their life was so happy, so tranquil, if colourless, that she could not really desire any change—she only thought of it.

Mr. Brice smiled unwillingly at her question, and did not answer. He was hot, uncomfortable, bored. In that state a man who has been married fifteen years does not think it necessary to be conversational. Mrs. Brice recognised the mood, and tactfully responded to it.

"I'm going to talk to the ticket agent, or whatever he is," she announced, rising. "Perhaps he can tell me something interesting about the people who live in those houses. Just imagine it! Being shut up here all the year round. I wonder what they think about? But probably they don't think. Good-bye."

Her husband followed the trim figure and easy gait with his glance, critically but not caustically. Then he lighted a fresh cigar and resigned himself more composedly to the discomforts of the situation. In an hour his mood would be almost cheerful, so beneficent are the effects of tobacco and solitude at the right time. Most women realise the potency of the first; but, alas! fail to discover that the second is still more powerful.

How long he sat there Mr. Brice never knew; but he must have fallen asleep, for he was roused suddenly by his wife's voice.

"Roger, Roger," she called, as she hurried down the platform towards him, "I've just had a long talk with the man in there, and who do you think he says lives here? Mrs. Page, Edna Larkin, of all people! Her husband is superintendent of the granite quarry two miles from here, and they live in that house with all the flowers growing round it—the white one. I thought you'd like to go to see her. There's plenty of time, unless you think it's too hot," she added stooping to retie her shoe-lace.

Her husband looked at her in bewilderment. Edna Larkin! He had not heard her name for fifteen—twenty years; had not thought of her voluntarily for ten; but the same old thrill, faint and tremulous, went over him. How unreal it seemed! Yet there stood Carrie before him awaiting his decision.

"Of course," he answered simply, rising. "I should like to see her very much. How strange that we should run across her here! I haven't thought of her since—since——"

"I knew some nice woman must live in that house," interrupted his wife briskly, helping him over the difficult pause.

"Now we must walk slowly. Isn't it hot?" And she smiled apologetically, as she tucked a tiny handkerchief around the collar of her shirt-waist. "It's almost gone, and I want to be respectable when we get there," she explained, as they walked along.

The half-mile between the little shed that served as station and Mrs. Page's pleasant cottage was traversed largely in silence. It was too hot to talk, Mrs. Brice said, and her husband was trying to simplify his confused thoughts.

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Edna Larkin! How he had loved that girl! As a lad in the country town where they were both born he had dreamed of nothing better, nothing greater than a life with her. It had been a boy and girl love affair that had grown as they grew, and when chance threw in his way the opportunity to enlarge his life and successes, his one hesitation had been that he must leave her behind.

"Only for a time," he had told himself and her; and she had promised to wait for him with all a girl's rapture over her first sweetheart.

The sequel had been ordinary enough. She had tired of waiting, perhaps had never really cared for him, and married another man.

In spite of himself, Roger Brice smiled as he recalled his misery at this crisis. Not because it had not been real, but because it had been so strong, so vehement. Looking back at it now, it seemed to him incredible that any event could have so wrought upon him.

Then had come the slow but sure rearrangement of his plans; his growing devotion to business; his gradual change from impulsive, ardent youth, to conventional middle age. When the wound had healed he had married, in the same deliberate way that he now did everything; telling the woman of his choice his little story, as something due to her. He remembered his very words:

"I cannot offer you the first, fresh affection of a young heart, dear. But what I do give you—what you will always have, whether you take it or leave it—is the deeper love of one who has suffered and overcome suffering."

And she had said that was all she deserved or wished.

Certainly, Carrie had made him happy. As he stole a look at her, he thought how few of his friends had such cheerful, helpful comrades.

Oddly enough, there flashed across his mind, the memory of one night three years past when she had been very ill, and his forlorn anxiety. What was that early, passionate love, for years almost forgotten, to these long years of calm affection and fellowship? It was a mere bagatelle—a boy's dream. Yet—

"Here we are," said Mrs. Brice, as she turned up the neat path between two flower beds, gay with sweet peas and nasturtiums. "Won't she be surprised to see you, after all these years?" she continued, after ringing the bell.

The door opened promptly, and a tall slender girl, evidently about sixteen, stood on the threshold.

"Is Mrs. Page at home?" asked Mrs. Brice, after waiting a moment for her husband to speak.

Evidently he preferred that she should take the lead.

"Yes'm. Won't you walk in?" answered the girl, opening the door into a long, low parlour, and ushering them to two large plush armchairs.

Not a window was open, and although the blinds were closed, the room was stifling.

"I'll go right and tell her you're here," she continued, disappearing after she had learned their name and errand.

Mr. and Mrs. Brice looked at each other, and the room, tentatively. She was the first to speak.

"What a pretty girl! Her complexion is like a wild rose; and her eyes and hair make such a striking contrast. Does she look like her mother? Oh, how hot it is!" and she picked up a photograph from the centre-table, using it as a fan.

"Yes; very like. Isn't she lovely?" answered her husband slowly.

He was still trying to readjust himself to the conditions before him.

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The names of other places will appear next week.

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"Why, Roger Brice, I declare! Who would 'a thought of seeing you?" said a shrill voice behind him, and he turned abruptly to see Mrs. Page standing on the threshold.

Could that be Edna Larkin? he asked himself while he shook hands with the newcomer, and murmured the conventional responses.

"I thought it was you when I saw you coming up the walk," continued the hostess turning towards Mrs. Brice, who had also risen, and nervously clasping the brooch at her throat. "And this is Mrs. Brice? I'm happy to make your acquaintance, ma'am. I used to go to school with your husband. Isn't it a dreadful hot day? Won't you have a fan, and a glass of water? Edna," to her daughter, who had re-entered bashfully, "can't you get the lady a glass of water? Yes, this is my daughter Edna. Mr. Page would name her after me. We've never had any other children. How did you ever happen to come to Belmont Junction? And how did you know I lived here?"

Mr. Brice found himself answering in an absent-minded way, but intelligently.

"Poor fellow! I suppose he thought she'd look just as she did twenty-five years ago," thought his wife compassionately, as she fanned herself. She even smiled as she remembered his description of Mrs. Page's beauty as a girl. Then she sighed a little. Mrs. Brice's first lover had given up his life at Gettysburg, "What changes time does make in all of us!" she thought, as she came to her husband's rescue.

How the time passed during that call Mr. Brice could never have told distinctly. His part in the conversation was decidedly passive, yet he talked just enough to banish constraint. Of this, however, he was only dimly aware. What he realised, was intensely conscious of, was the presence of the woman who had been his early sweetheart—the woman he had unwittingly idealized in memory. His ideal!

Not one detail of her present personality, from her awkward figure, red dimpled hands, thin straggling hair, faded eyes, and her kindly but barren talk, escaped him. Still more keenly did he realise the narrowness of her mind, partly due to circumstances, no doubt; but—

When she spoke of sending Edna away "to get an education," he started, and gazed fixedly at the girl; but his wife quietly suggested several schools, encouraged the idea, and finally brought the call to a close. Mother and daughter accompanied their visitors to the gate, and with kindly generosity filled Mrs. Brice's hands with the flowers she had admired. At length the final good-byes were said.

"What a pretty girl the daughter is!" ventured Mrs. Brice breaking the silence on their walk back to the station.

"So quiet and ladylike. I hope she will be able to study, I'm sure; she seemed so anxious to be a teacher," She paused, hesitatingly. Her inmost thought was, "I wonder what Roger thought about the mother," but sure of her own position, she was too good-natured to ask.

Mr. Brice walked on without replying. He was still busy trying to harmonise present circumstances with past. This is a difficult task always; but to a man of his unimaginative temperament it is well-nigh impossible, mentally.

Just before they reached the station he turned and looked at his wife long and eagerly; looked at her so intently that she felt his gaze, and smiled up at him encouragingly. Mrs. Brice had never been a beauty, never even a pretty woman; but there was a charm about her that no one who met her failed to recognise. This charm grew on acquaintance.

"Well?" she asked.

Mr. Brice did not answer for a moment. Then, as if the expression of his state of mind was wrung from him involuntarily, he made his only comment upon their call.

"To think that Edna Larkin could ever be so fat!" he said slowly, and relapsed into silence. "Here's the train, dear," he added ten minutes later.

Mrs. Brice smiled at him affectionately. She understood the significance of that "dear."

HELEN RAY KENT.

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I was for years; by chance I came across a simple home remedy that reduced me from 17st. to 10st. 12lb., and I will willingly send particulars **free** to any sufferer enclosing stamp. Mrs. L. E. FELL, 195 Oxford Street, London, W.

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Pamphlet on Nervous Diseases of All Kinds. THIS PAMPHLET describes all the symptoms which arise from Diseases of the NERVOUS SYSTEM. It is up-to-date, having been compiled after years of labour and experience in the Treatment of these Maladies. It is complete, practical, and can be readily understood and acted upon. It gives pure and simple advice to Sufferers. Send stamped addressed envelope to GEORGE WRIGHT, ESQ., Colne House, REMBRANDT ROAD, LEE LONDON, S.E. *(Name this Paper.)*

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BEST OF ALL BEVERAGES

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GOOD! IT'S MASON'S

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8 Gallons Prime Beer for 6d.

Sample Free for 9 Stamps.

AGENTS WANTED EVERYWHERE.

NEWBALL & MASON, NOTTINGHAM.

VARICOCELE.

Every man suffering from Varicocele and the allied troubles, should send for treatise, describing their Causes, Symptoms, Results, and Successful and Painless Treatment without surgical operation or the use of cumbersome trusses and electrical appliances. Will be sent sealed, post free, three stamps.

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KEATING'S POWDER

KILLS BUGS FLEAS MOTHS BEETLES

TINS 3d 6d & 1s

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THE ONLY EFFICACIOUS SUBSTITUTE FOR COD LIVER OIL.

DEVONSHIRE CREAM.

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In Patent Air-tight Tins. ½lb., 1s. 4d.; 1lb., 2s. 4d.; 2lb., 4s.; including tin and postage.

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ALL FAT PEOPLE

can safely **Reduce Weight and cure Corpulency permanently** by taking **TRILENE TABLETS** (Regd.) for a few weeks. They are small, agreeable, harmless, and never fail to IMPROVE both HEALTH and FIGURE without Change of Diet. An English Countess writes: "*Your Trilene Tablets act admirably.*"

Send 2s. 6d. to **THE TRILENE CO.,** Sole Proprietors, **66 Finsbury Pavement, London.**

SAMPLES OF TESTIMONIALS.

Princess Liechtenstein writes from Landsberg, Austria: "Pray send your excellent tablets directly." Mr. Canham, 87 Alexandra Road, Norwich: "Tablets cured my wife of extreme stoutness; it has never returned." Mrs. H. Cox, 28 Watnall Road, Hucknall Torkard, writes: "The Tablets reduced me 1½ stone." Mrs. S. Alexander, 102 Dixon Street, New Swindon, says: "They reduced me 28lb., and I am cured." Mrs. Darnley-Smith, of Landscove Vicarage, Ashburton, says: "Tablets have reduced me very much." Mrs. Crossley, of Rose Hill, Torver, Comston, says: "I weigh much less and can breathe so much easier; I am delighted."

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The Brain Gymnasium

In these competitions a prize of £2 will be awarded each week to the competitor whose attempt we receive giving the correct solutions of all the puzzles. If more than one is absolutely correct the prize of £2 will be given to the first correct attempt dealt with.

If no lists of absolutely correct solutions are sent in the first prize will be awarded to the competitor whose attempt is first dealt with showing the fewest mistakes.

Each week we shall award in addition to the above, either ten of our silver plated pencil-cases or ten popular six shilling novels, to be distributed amongst the competitors whose attempts are absolutely correct and have failed to win the first prize, or, if no complete lists of correct solutions are received, to those whose attempts show the fewest mistakes.

Write all your solutions on one sheet of paper, putting the number against each. Post the batch in an envelope marked "Brain Gymnasium," to reach the Editor, Short Stories, 18 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C., by first post on Monday, September 3rd, 1900.

Readers are invited to submit puzzles, acrostics, conundrums, word-squares, etc., for publication on this page. A gold-plated pencil-case will be given to each reader whose attempts are used. All attempts must be vouched for as original, and, of course, it is distinctly understood that the sender of a puzzle must neither compete in the competition nor divulge to anyone the solution. Any reader found infringing this rule will be severely dealt with.

No. 199.

The following letters, when re-arranged, will form a well-known proverb:

AA D E GG H II LLLL N OO R SS TTTTT.

No. 200.

What words of the English language may be pronounced softer and louder, quicker and shorter, by adding syllables to them?

No. 201.

I am a useful article; change my head and I am a metal, again and I am a drink. Change my tail and I am a vehicle, change my head and I am an animal.

No. 202.

When a certain number of two digits is doubled and increased by 36, the result is the same as if the number had been inverted and doubled and then diminished by 36. What is the number?

No. 203.

So proudly pranced his gallant steed,
His lofty FIRST gleamed bright;
Sure fle'er in tourney had been seen,
Ere this, so brave a knight.

He sees his lady's azure eyes
Beam on him, brimmed with love,
When, 'mid the NEXT that mark his path,
He turns his glance above.

No WHOLE, reversed, has been his lot,
But WHOLE his foes ret eat;
Yet conquered now, he bends before
His lady's glance so sweet.

No. 204.

Divide the number 112 into four parts, so that the first part increased by two, the second multiplied by three, the third diminished by four, and the fourth divided by five may all be equal.

RESULT OF TRACING FACES COMPETITION.

The prize of £2 has been awarded this week to Mr. M. Read, of "Chesterton," South Croxted Road, West Dulwich, whose solution was the first correct one dealt with.

A copy of "The Knight of the Golden Chain," by R. D. Chetwoode, has been sent to each of the following:

W. Gyde, The Barracks, Warley, Essex.
H. Culyer, 14 Chalford Road, West Norwood, S.E.
F. Culyer, 14 Chalford Road, West Norwood, S.E.
E. W. Sanders, 10 Alderney Street, Eccleston Square, S.W.
Miss A. Brown, 34a Great George Street, Liverpool.
Pte. John O'Connor, No. 6625 E Company, 2nd Battalion King's Regiment, Royal Barracks, Dublin.
W. B. Heberden, 42 Hartington Road, Stockton-on-Tees.
E. C. Drayson, Hawkshill, Esher, Surrey.
G. S. Walker, 119 Newington Green Road, Canonbury, N.
R. Taylor, Kenilworth, The Parade, Worthing.

Key to TRACING FACES COMPETITION.

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Single column, per inch, per insertion	£0 10 0
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Quarter-page " "	2 10 0
Eighth-page " "	1 5 0
Front page, whole " "	12 10 0
" half	6 5 0

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Series discount: 5 per cent. for 13, 10 per cent. for 26, 15 per cent. for 52 insertions.

Black blocks are charged 25 per cent. extra. All advertisements are subject to approval. All copy must be sent in by Noon on Tuesday, August 28th, if intended for the issue on sale Sept. 11th, and dated September 15th. The Proprietors reserve the right to hold over or suspend the insertion of any advertisement without prejudice to other insertions on order. All communications should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, "Pearson's Weekly" Offices, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

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SEE SPECIAL 10 DAYS' OFFER AT FOOT OF PAGE.

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FOR THE HAIR

UNDER ROYAL PATRONAGE.

Eradicates Scurf and Dandriff.

Prevents Hair Falling and Turning Grey.

Promotes Growth.

Contains no Dye.

Is delightfully Cooling, Refreshing, and Invigorating.

Keeps the Hair Soft and Pliant, and Imparts to it the Lustre and Freshness of Youth.

Invaluable for Use after Sea Bathing.

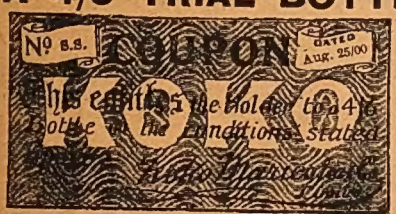
Allays Irritation and Keeps the Scalp Clean.

Recommended and Used by H.M. THE QUEEN (of Greece), PRINCESS VICTORIA (of Schaumburg-Lippe), PRINCESS HOHENLOHE, PRINCESS MARIE (of Greece), PRINCESS HENRY REUSS, Rear-Admiral TINKLAR, &c., &c.

KOKO FOR THE HAIR

SPECIAL OFFER to those who have not yet tried KOKO.

A 4/6 TRIAL BOTTLE for 2/-.



Any person forwarding this Coupon and P.O. for Two Shillings, and four Stamps to pay postage, packing, &c., will receive immediately for trial, by Parcel Post, under cover, prepaid, **One Regular 12 oz. Bottle of Koko for the Hair**, the price of which is **4/6**, provided it is ordered within **ten days from the date of this offer.** In no case will more than one bottle be sent for the use of the same person on this coupon, as we make the offer solely for trial, knowing it creates a demand when once used; and this large bottle gives it a fair trial. We find it better to thus practically **give away** one bottle to make a customer than to spend large amounts in advertising. **Any person into whose hands this offer comes may avail themselves of it.** Address all Orders with Coupons to—

THE KOKO-MARICOPAS CO., LTD., 16 BEVIS MARKS, LONDON.

Orders may be sent with this Coupon after the expiration of date, provided we are then issuing these trial bottle Coupons, and if we are not, the money will be returned. This Coupon will be received at 16 BEVIS MARKS, E.C., or 113 REGENT STREET, LONDON, W., and **2/-** only will be required when presented personally.

KOKO is sold by all Chemists, &c., at 2/6 and 4/6 per bottle. For the sake of greater profit you may be asked to buy some other hair preparation instead. In justice to us kindly insist on having Koko.

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Prescribed by members of the London Medical Profession. Can be obtained from all Chemists as a Lotion or an Ointment, at 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d., or Post Free from the Proprietors.

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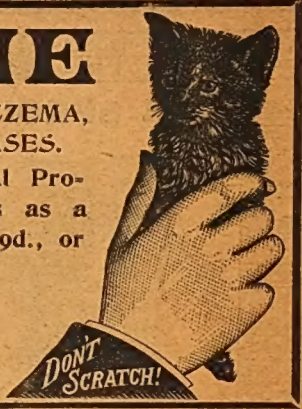
THE WEDNESFIELD CHEMICAL SYNDICATE LTD.,
WOLVERHAMPTON.



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Grate Polish

No Hard Work.

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New Sun Shade Eyepieces.

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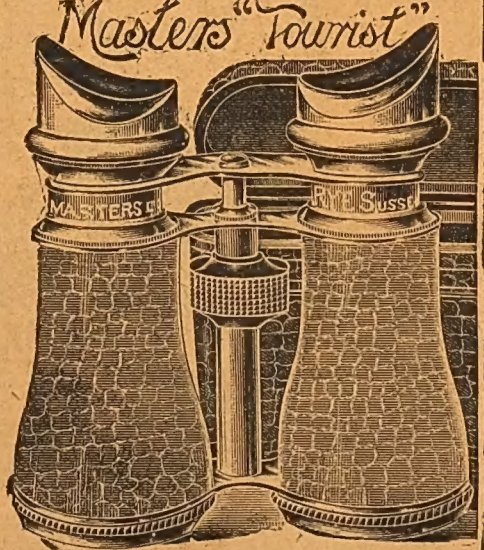
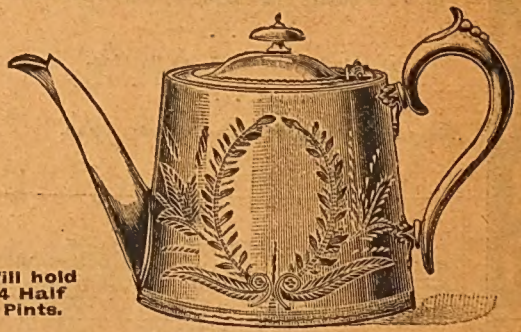


J. N. MASTERS LTD, will send one of these handsome **FIELD** and **MARINE GLASSES**, price value **14/6**, complete with Crocodile Leather Case and Sling, to any reader who mentions *Short Stories* on receipt of **2/6**. If you do not approve of them, we will return your **2/6** in full. If you approve of them you send us **2/-** on receipt, and **2/-** each month for five months; but should you prefer to send the balance at once, send only **10/6**, as we allow you **1/6** discount; or you may send **13/-** at once, and if you do not approve of the Glasses we will return your **13/-** in full.

J. N. MASTERS LTD., RYE, SUSSEX.

MASTERS' ELECTRO SILVER TEAPOT 10/6



Will hold 4 Half Pints.

A FREE TRIAL FOR 2/6.

MASTERS LTD., will send one of these celebrated Half-Guinea Electro Silver Teapots, to any reader (who mentions *Short Stories*), on receipt of **2/6**.

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